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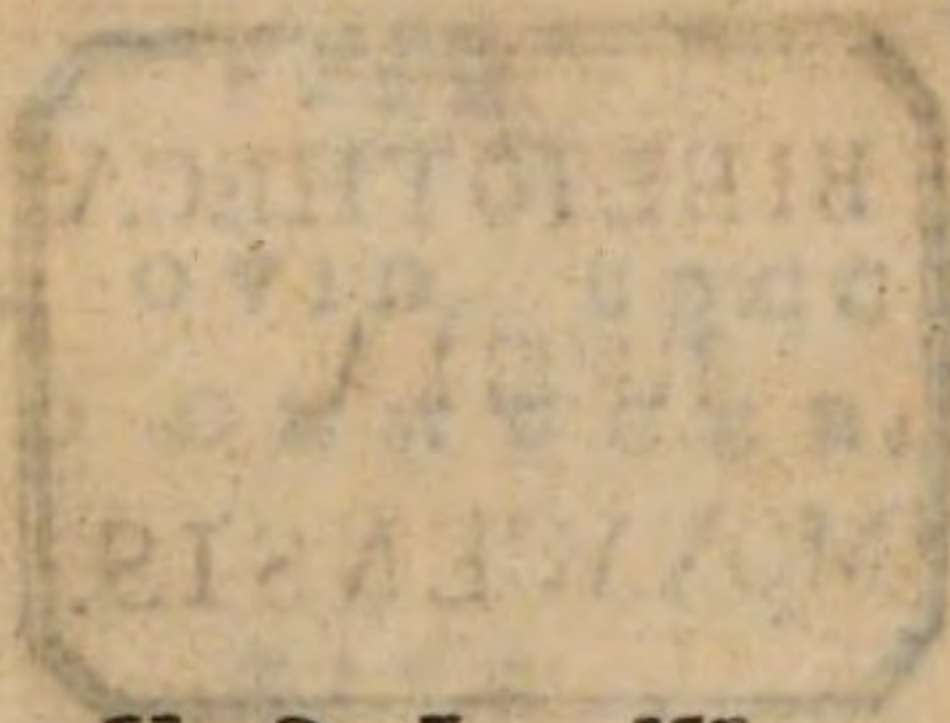
THE

BRITISH POETS.



VOL. XI.

EDINBURGH:

Printed for A. KINCAID and W. CREECH,
and J. BALFOUR.

M, DCC, LXXIII.

BIBLIOTHECA
REGIA
MONACENSIS.

FABLES,

ANCIENT AND MODERN;

TRANSLATED INTO

VERSE,

FROM

HOMER, OVID, BOCCACE,
AND CHAUCER:

WITH

ORIGINAL POEMS.

By JOHN DRYDEN, Esq;

VOLUME III.

Nunc ultro ad cineres ipsius et ossa parentis
(Haud equidem sine mente, reor, sine numine divum)
Adsumus. VIRG. Æn. lib. 5.

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(Haud equidem hinc metuo, teor, hoc dumine dictum)
Aduumus. VIRG. Æn. lib. 7.

LONDON:

Printed for J. KINCAID and W. CREECH,
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M, DCC, LXXIII.

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TO HIS

GRACE

THE

DUKE of ORMOND.

My Lord,

SOME eſtates are held in England, by paying a fine at the change of every Lord. I have enjoy'd the patronage of your family, from the time of your excellent grandfather to this preſent day. I have dedicated the lives of Plutarch to the firſt Duke; and have celebrated the memory of your heroic father. Tho' I am very ſhort of the age of Neſtor, yet I have liv'd to a third generation of your houſe; and by your Grace's favour am admitted ſtill to hold from you by the ſame tenure.

I am not vain enough to boaſt that I have deſerv'd the value of ſo illuſtrious a line; but my fortune is the greater, that for three deſcents they have been pleaſed to diſtinguiſh my poems from thoſe of other men; and have accordingly made me their peculiar care. May it be permitted me to ſay, that as your grandfather and father were cheriſh'd and adorn'd with honours by two ſucceſſive Monarchs, ſo I have been eſteem'd, and patroniſed, by the grandfather, the father, and the ſon, deſcended from one of the moſt ancient, moſt conſpicuous, and moſt deſerving families in Europe.

'Tis true, that by delaying the payment of my laſt fine, when it was due by your Grace's acceſſion to the titles and patrimonies of your houſe, I may ſeem, in

rigour of law, to have made a forfeiture of my claim; yet my heart has always been devoted to your ſervice: And ſince you have been graciouſly pleaſed, by your permiſſion of this addreſs, to accept the tender of my duty, 'tis not yet too late to lay theſe poems at your feet.

The world is ſenſible that you worthily ſucceed, not only to the honours of your anceſtors, but alſo to their virtues. The long chain of magnanimity, courage, eaſineſs of acceſs, and deſire of doing good, even to the prejudice of your fortune, is ſo far from being broken in your Grace, that the precious metal yet runs pure to the neweſt link of it; which I will not call the laſt, becauſe I hope and pray, it may deſcend to late poſterity: And your flouriſhing youth, and that of your excellent Ducheſs, are happy omens of my wiſh.

'Tis obſerv'd by Livy and by others, that ſome of the nobleſt Roman families retained a reſemblance of their anceſtry, not only in their ſhapes and features, but alſo in their manners, their qualities, and the diſtinguiſhing characters of their minds; Some lines were noted for a ſtern, rigid virtue, ſavage, haughty, parſimonious, and unpopul ar: Others were more ſweet and affable; made of a more pliant paſte, humble, courteous, and obliging; ſtudious of doing charitable offices, and diffuſive of the goods which they enjoyed. The laſt of theſe is the proper and indelible character of your Grace's family. God Almighty has endued you with a ſoftneſs, a beneficence, an attractive behaviour, winning on the hearts of others; and ſo ſenſible of their miſery, that the wounds of fortune ſeem not inflicted on them, but on yourſelf. You are ſo ready to redreſs, that you almoſt prevent their wiſhes, and

always exceed their expectations: As if what was yours, was not your own, and not given you to poſſeſs, but to beſtow on wanting merit. But this is a topic which I muſt caſt in ſhades, leſt I offend your modeſty, which is ſo far from being oſtentatious of the good you do, that it bluſhes even to have it known: And therefore, I muſt leave you to the ſatisfaction and teſtimony of your own conſcience, which, though it be a ſilent panegyric, is yet the beſt.

You are ſo eaſy of acceſs, that Poplicola was not more, whoſe doors were opened on the outſide, to ſave the people even the common civility of aſking entrance; where all were equally admitted; where nothing that was reaſonable was denied; where misfortune was a powerful recommendation, and where (I can ſcarce forbear ſaying) that want itſelf was a powerful mediator, and was next to merit.

The hiſtory of Peru aſſures us, that their Inca's, above all their titles, eſteemed that the higheſt, which called them Lovers of the poor: A name more glorious than the Felix, Pius, and Auguſtus of the Roman Emperors; which were epithets of flattery, deſerved by few of them, and not running in a blood like the perpetual gentleneſs, and inherent goodneſs of the Ormond family.

Gold, as it is the pureſt, ſo it is the ſofteſt, and moſt ductile of all metals: Iron, which is the hardeſt, gathers ruſt, corrodes itſelf; and is therefore ſubject to corruption: It was never intended for coins and medals, or to bear the faces and inſcriptions of the great. Indeed, 'tis fit for armour, to bear off inſults, and preſerve the wearer in the day of battle: But the danger

once repelled, 'tis laid aſide by the brave, as a garment too rough for civil converſation; a neceſſary guard in war, but too harſh and cumberſome in peace, and which keeps off the embraces of a more human life.

For this reaſon, my Lord, though you have courage in a heroical degree, yet I aſcribe it to you but as your ſecond attribute: Mercy, beneficence, and compaſſion, claim precedence, as they are firſt in the Divine Nature. An intrepid courage, which is inherent in your Grace, is at beſt but a holiday kind of virtue, to be ſeldom exerciſed, and never but in caſes of neceſſity; affability, mildneſs, tenderneſs, and a word, which I would fain bring back to its original ſignification of virtue, I mean good nature, are of daily uſe: They are the bread of mankind, and ſtaff of life: Neither ſighs, nor tears, nor groans, nor curſes of the vanquiſhed, follow acts of compaſſion, and of charity: But a ſincere pleaſure, and ſerenity of mind, in him who performs an action of mercy, which cannot ſuffer the misfortunes of another, without redreſs; leſt they ſhould bring a kind of contagion along with them, and pollute the happineſs which he enjoys.

Yet, ſince the perverſe temper of mankind, ſince oppreſſion on one ſide, and ambition on the other, are ſometimes the unavoidable occaſions of war; that courage, that magnanimity, and reſolution, which is born with you, cannot be too much commended: And here it grieves me that I am ſcanted in the pleaſure of dwelling on many of your actions: But αἰδέομαι Τρωας is an expreſſion which Tully often uſes, when he would do what he dares not, and fears the cenſure of the Romans.

I have ſometimes been forced to amplify on others; but here, where the ſubject is ſo fruitful, that the harveſt overcomes the reaper, I am ſhortened by my chain, and can only ſee what is forbidden me to reach: Since it is not permitted me to commend you, according to the extent of my wiſhes, and much leſs is it in my power to make my commendations equal to your merits.

Yet, in this frugality of your praiſes, there are ſome things which I cannot omit, without detracting from your character. You have ſo formed your own education, as enables you to pay the debt you owe your country; or, more properly ſpeaking, both your countries: becauſe you were born, I may almoſt ſay in purple, at the caſtle of Dublin, when your grandfather was Lord-Lieutenant, and have ſince been bred in the court of England.

If this addreſs had been in verſe, I might have called you, as Claudian calls Mercury, *Numen commune, gemino faciens commercia mundo.* The better to ſatisfy this double obligation, you have early cultivated the genius you have to arms, that, when the ſervice of Britain or Ireland ſhall require your courage, and your conduct, you may exert them both to the benefit of either country. You began in the cabinet what you afterwards practiſed in the camp; and thus both Lucullus and Caeſar (to omit a crowd of ſhining Romans) formed themſelves to the war by the ſtudy of hiſtory; and, by the examples of the greateſt captains, both of Greece and Italy, before their time. I name thoſe two commanders in particular, becauſe they were better read in chronicle than any of the Roman leaders; and

that Lucullus in particular, having only the theory of war from books, was thought fit, without practice, to be ſent into the field againſt the moſt formidable enemy of Rome. Tully indeed was called the learned conſul in deriſion; but then he was not born a ſoldier: His head was turned another way: When he read the tacticks, he was thinking on the bar, which was his field of battle. The knowledge of warfare is thrown away on a general who dares not make uſe of what he knows. I commend it only in a man of courage and of reſolution; in him it will direct his martial ſpirit; and teach him the way to the beſt victories, which are thoſe that are leaſt bloody, and which, though atchieved by the hand, are managed by the head. Science diſtinguiſhes a man of honour from one of thoſe athletic brutes, whom undeſervedly we call heroes. Curſed be the poet, who firſt honoured with that name a mere Ajax, a man-killing ideot. The Ulyſſes of Ovid upbraids his ignorance, that he underſtood not the ſhield for which he pleaded: There was engraven on it, plans of cities, and maps of countries, which Ajax could not comprehend, but looked on them as ſtupidly as his fellow-beaſt the lion. But, on the other ſide, your Grace has given yourſelf the education of his rival, you have ſtudied every ſpot of ground in Flanders, which, for theſe ten years paſt, has been the ſcene of battles and ſieges. No wonder if you performed your part with ſuch applauſe, on a theatre which you underſtood ſo well.

If I deſigned this for a poetical encomium, it were eaſy to enlarge on ſo copious a ſubject; but, confining myſelf to the ſeverity of truth, and to what is becoming me to ſay, I muſt not only paſs over many inſtances

of your military ſkill, but alſo thoſe of your aſſiduous diligence in the war; and of your perſonal bravery, attended with an ardent thirſt of honour; a long train of generoſity; profuſeneſs of doing good; a ſoul unſatisfied with all it has done; and an unextinguiſhed deſire of doing more. But all this is matter for your own hiſtorians; I am, as Virgil ſays, *ſpatiis excluſus iniquis.*

Yet, not to be wholly ſilent of all your charities, I muſt ſtay a little on one action, which preferred the relief others to the conſideration of yourſelf. When, in the battle of Landen, your heat of courage (a fault only pardonable to your youth) had tranſported you ſo far before your friends, that they were unable to follow, much leſs to ſuccour you; when you were not only dangerouſly, but in all appearance mortally wounded; when, in that deſperate condition, you were made priſoner, and carried to Namur, at that time in poſſeſſion of the French; then it was, my Lord, that you took a conſiderable part of what was remitted to you of your own revenues, and, as a memorable inſtance of your heroic charity, put it into the hands of Count Guiſcard, who was governor of the place, to be deſtributed among your fellow-priſoners. The French commander, charmed with the greatneſs of your ſoul, accordingly conſign'd it to the uſe for which it was intended by the donor: By which means the lives of ſo many miſerable men were ſaved, and a comfortable proviſion made for their ſubſiſtance, who had otherways periſhed, had not you been the companion of their misfortune; or rather ſent by Providence, like another Joſeph, to keep out famine from invading thoſe

whom in humility you called your brethren. How happy was it for thoſe poor creatures, that your Grace was made their fellow-ſufferer? And how glorious for you, that you choſe to want, rather than not relieve the wants of others? The heathen poet, in commending the charity of Dido to the Trojans, ſpoke like a Chriſtian: *Non ignara mali, miſeris ſuccurrere diſco.* All men, even thoſe of a different intereſt, and contrary principles, muſt praiſe this action, as the moſt eminent for piety, not only in this degenerate age, but almoſt in any of the former; when men were made *de meliore luto;* when examples of charity were frequent, and when there were in being *Teucri pulcherrima proles, magnanimi heroes, nati melioribus annis.* No envy can detract from this; it will ſhine in hiſtory; and like ſwans, grow whiter the longer it endures: And the name of ORMOND will be more celebrated in his captivity, than in his greateſt triumphs.

But all actions of your Grace are of a piece; as waters keep the tenor of their fountains; your compaſſion is general, and has the ſame effect as well on enemies as friends. 'Tis ſo much in your nature to do good, that your life is but one continued act of placing benefits on many; as the ſun is always carrying his light to ſome part or other of the world: And were it not that your reaſon guides where to give, I might almoſt ſay, that you could not help beſtowing more than is conſiſting with the fortune of a private man, or with the will of any but an Alexander.

What wonder is it then, that being born for a bleſſing to mankind, your ſuppoſed death in that engagement was ſo generally lamented through the nation?

The concernment for it was as univerſal as the loſs; and though the gratitude might be counterfeit in ſome, yet the tears of all were real; where every man deplored his private part in that calamity; and even thoſe who had not taſted of your favours, yet built ſo much on the fame of your beneficence, that they bemoaned the loſs of their expectations.

This brought the untimely death of your great father into freſh remembrance; as if the ſame decree had paſſed on two ſhort ſucceſſive generations of the virtuous; and I repeated to myſelf the ſame verſes, which I had formerly applied to him: *Oſtendunt terris hunc tantum fata, nec ultra eſſe ſinunt.* But, to the joy not only of all good men, but of mankind in general, the unhappy omen took not place. You are ſtill living to enjoy the bleſſings and applauſe of all the good you have perform'd, the prayers of multitudes whom you have obliged, for your long proſperity; and that your power of doing generous and charitable actions may be as extended as your will; which is by none more zealouſly deſir'd than by

Your GRACE's *moſt humble,*

moſt obliged, and moſt

Obedient Servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

PREFACE.

'TIS with a Poet, as with a man who deſigns to build, and is very exact, as he ſuppoſes, in caſting up the coſt beforehand: But, generally ſpeaking, he is miſtaken in his account, and reckons ſhort of the expence he firſt intended. He alters his mind as the work proceeds, and will have this or that convenience more, of which he had not thought when he began. So has it happened to me: I have built a houſe, where I intended but a lodge; yet with better ſucceſs than a certain nobleman, who, beginning with a dog-kennil, never lived to finiſh the palace he had contrived.

From tranſlating the firſt of Homer's Iliads, (which I intended as an eſſay to the whole work) I proceeded to the tranſlation of the twelfth book of Ovid's Metamorphoſes, becauſe it contains, among other things, the cauſes, the beginning, and ending, of the Trojan war: Here I ought in reaſon to have ſtopped; but the ſpeeches of Ajax and Ulyſſes lying next in my way, I could not balk 'em. When I had compaſſed them, I was ſo taken with the former part of the fifteenth book, (which is the maſter-piece of the whole Metamorphoſes) that I enjoined myſelf the pleaſing taſk of rendering it into Engliſh. And now I found, by the number of my verſes, that they began to ſwell into a little volume; which gave me an occaſion of looking backward on ſome beauties of my author, in his former books.

There occurred to me the hunting of the boar, Cinyras and Myrrha, the good-natured ſtory of Baucis and Philemon, with the reſt, which I have tranſlated cloſely enough, and given them the ſame turn of verſe which they had in the original; and this, I may ſay without vanity, is not the talent of every Poet: He who has arrived the neareſt to it, is the ingenious and learned Sandys, the beſt verſifier of the former age; if I may properly call it by that name, which was the former part of this concluding century. For Spencer and Fairfax both flouriſh'd in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; great maſters in our language, and who ſaw much farther into the beauties of our numbers, than thoſe who immediately followed them. Milton was the poetical ſon of Spencer, and Mr Waller of Fairfax; for we have our lineal deſcents and clans, as well as other families: Spencer more than once inſinuates, that the ſoul of Chaucer was transfuſed into his body; and that he was begotten by him two hundred years after his deceaſe. Milton has acknowledged to me, that Spencer was his original; and many beſides myſelf have heard our famous Waller own, that he derived the harmony of his numbers from the Godfrey of Bulloign, which was turned into Engliſh by Mr Fairfax. But to return: Having done with Ovid for this time, it came into my mind, that our Engliſh poet Chaucer in many things relembled him, and that with no diſadvantage on the ſide of the modern author, as I ſhall endeavour to prove when I compare them: And; as I am, and always have been, ſtudious to promote the honour of my native country, ſo I ſoon reſolved to put their merits to the trial, by turning ſome of the

Canterbury tales into our language, as it is now refined; for, by this means, both the poets being ſet in the ſame light, and dreſſed in the ſame Engliſh habit, ſtory to be compared with ſtory, a certain judgment may be made betwixt them, by the reader, without obtruding my opinion on him; or, if I ſeem partial to my country-man, and predeceſſor in the laurel, the friends of antiquity are not few; and, beſides many of the learned, Ovid has almoſt all the beaux, and the whole fair ſex his declared patrons. Perhaps I have aſſumed ſomewhat more to myſelf than they allow me; becauſe I have adventured to ſum up the evidence: But the readers are the jury; and their privilege remains entire to decide according to the merits of the cauſe; or, if they pleaſe to bring it another hearing, before ſome other court. In the mean time, to follow the thread of my diſcourſe, (as thoughts, according to Mr Hobbs, have always ſome connection) ſo from Chaucer I was led to think on Boccace, who was not only his contemporary, but alſo purſued the ſame ſtudies; wrote novels in proſe, and many works in verſe; particularly, is ſaid to have invented the octave rhyme, or ſtanza of eight lines, which ever ſince has been maintained by the practice of all Italian writers, who are, or at leaſt aſſume the title of heroic Poets: He and Chaucer, among other things, had this in common, that they refined their mother-tongues: but with this difference, that Dante had begun to file their language, at leaſt in verſe, before the time of Boccace, who likewiſe received no little help from his maſter Petrarch: But the reformation of their proſe was wholly owing to Boccace himſelf, who is yet the ſtandard of purity in the

Italian tongue; though many of his phraſes are become obſolete, as in proceſs of time it muſt needs happen. Chaucer (as you have formerly been told by our learned Mr Rhymer) firſt adorned and amplified our barren tongue from the Provencall, which was then the moſt poliſhed of all the modern languages: But this ſubject has been copiouſly treated by that great critic, who deſerves no little commendation from us his countrymen. For theſe reaſons of time, and reſemblance of genius, in Chaucer and Boccace, I reſolved to join them in my preſent work; to which I have added ſome original papers of my own; which, whether they are equal or inferior to my other poems, an author is the moſt improper judge; and therefore I leave them wholly to the mercy of the reader. I will hope the beſt, that they will not be condemned; but, if they ſhould, I have the excuſe of an old gentleman, who mounting on horſeback before ſome ladies, when I was preſent, got up ſomewhat heavily, but deſired of the fair ſpectators, that they would count fourſcore and eight before they judged him. By the mercy of God, I am already come within twenty years of his number, a cripple in my limbs; but what decays are in my mind the reader muſt determine. I think myſelf as vigorous as ever in the faculties of my ſoul, excepting only my memory, which is not impair'd to any great degree; and, if I loſe not more of it, I have no great reaſon to complain. What judgment I had, increaſes rather than diminiſhes; and thoughts, ſuch as they are, come crowding in ſo faſt upon me, that my only difficulty is to chuſe or to reject; to run them into verſe, or to give them the other harmony of proſe. I have ſo long ſtudi-

ed and practiſed both, that they are grown into a habit, and become familiar to me. In ſhort, though I may lawfully plead ſome part of the old gentleman's excuſe: yet I will reſerve it till I think I have greater need, and aſk no grains of allowance for the faults of this my preſent work, but thoſe which are given of courſe to human frailty. I will not trouble my reader with the ſhortneſs of time in which I writ it; or the ſeveral intervals of ſickneſs: They who think too well of their own performances, are apt to boaſt in their prefaces how little time their works have coſt them, and what other buſineſs of more importance interfered; but the reader will be apt to aſk the queſtion, why they allowed not a longer time to make their works more perfect? and why they had ſo deſpicable an opinion of their judges, as to thruſt their indigeſted ſtuff upon them, as if they deſerved no better?

With this account of my preſent undertaking, I conclude the firſt part of this diſcourſe: In the ſecond part, as at a ſecond ſitting, though I alter not the draught, I muſt touch the ſame features over again, and change the dead-colouring of the whole. In general I will only ſay, that I have written nothing which favours of immorality or profaneneſs; at leaſt, I am not conſcious to myſelf of any ſuch intention. If there happen to be found an irreverent expreſſion, or a thought too wanton, they are crept into my verſes through my inadvertency: If the ſearchers find any in the cargo, let them be ſtaved or forfeited, like counterbanded goods; at leaſt, let their authors be anſwerable for them, as being but imported merchandize, and not of my own manufacture. On the other ſide,

I have endeavoured to chuſe ſuch fables, both ancient and modern, as contain in each of them ſome inſtructive moral which I could prove by induction, but the way is tedious; and they leap foremoſt into ſight, without the reader's trouble of looking after them. I wiſh I could affirm with a ſafe conſcience, that I had taken the ſame care in all my former writings; for it muſt be owned, that, ſuppoſing verſes are never ſo beautiful or pleaſing, yet, if they contain any thing which ſhocks religion, or good manners, they are at beſt, what Horace ſays of good numbers without good ſenſe, *Verſus inopes rerum, nugaeque canorae.* Thus far, I hope, I am right in court, without renouncing my other right of ſelf-defence, where I have been wrongfully accus'd, and my ſenſe wire-drawn into blaſphemy or bawdry, as it has often been by a religious lawyer, in a late pleading againſt the ſtage; in which he mixes truth with falſhood, and has not forgotten the old rule, of calumniating ſtrongly, that ſomething may remain.

I reſume the thread of my diſcourſe with the firſt of my tranſlations, which was the firſt Iliad of Homer. If it ſhall pleaſe God to give me longer life, and moderate health, my intentions are to tranſlate the whole Ilias; provided ſtill, that I meet with thoſe encouragements from the public, which may enable me to proceed in my undertaking with ſome chearfulneſs. And this I dare aſſure the world before-hand, that I have found by trial Homer a more pleaſing taſk than Virgil, (though I ſay not the tranſlation will be leſs laborious.) For the Grecian is more according to my genius, than the Latin Poet. In the works of the two

authors we may read their manners, and natural inclinations, which are wholly different. Virgil was of a quiet, ſedate temper; Homer was violent, impetuous, and full of fire. The chief talent of Virgil was propriety of thoughts, and ornament of words: Homer was rapid in his thoughts, and took all the liberties both of numbers, and of expreſſions, which his language, and the age in which he lived allowed him: Homer's invention was more copious, Virgil's more confined: So that, if Homer had not led the way, it was not in Virgil to have begun heroic poetry: For nothing can be more evident, than that the Roman poem is but the ſecond part of the Ilias; a continuation of the ſame ſtory; and the perſons already formed: The manners of Æneas, are thoſe of Hector, ſuperadded to thoſe which Homer gave him. The adventures of Ulyſſes in the Odyſſeis, are imitated in the firſt ſix books of Virgil's Æneas: And though the accidents are not the ſame, (which would have argued him of a ſervile, copying, and total barrenneſs of invention) yet the ſeas were the ſame in which both the heroes wandered; and Dido cannot be denied to be the poetical daughter of Calypſo. The ſix latter books of Virgil's poem are the four and twenty Iliads contracted: A quarrel occaſioned by a lady, a ſingle combat, battles fought, and a town beſieged. I ſay not this in derogation to Virgil; neither do I contradict any thing which I have formerly ſaid in his juſt praiſe: For his epiſodes are almoſt wholly of his own invention; and the form which he has given to the telling, makes the tale his own, even though the original ſtory had been the ſame. But this proves, however, that Homer taught Virgil to deſign: And if invention

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be the firſt virtue of an epic poet, then the Latin poem can only be allowed the ſecond place. Mr Hobbs, in the preface to his own bald tranſlation of the Ilias, (ſtudying poetry as he did mathematics, when it was too late,) Mr Hobbs, I ſay, begins the praiſe of Homer where he ſhould have ended it. He tells us, that the firſt beauty of an epic poem conſiſts in diction, that is, in the choice of words, and harmony of numbers. Now, the words are the colouring of the work, which, in the order of nature, is laſt to be conſidered. The deſign, the diſpoſition, the manners, and the thoughts, are all before it: Where any of thoſe are wanting or imperfect, ſo much wants or is imperfect in the imitation of human life; which is in the very definition of a poem. Words indeed, like glaring colours, are the firſt beauties that ariſe, and ſtrike the ſight; but, if the draught be falſe or lame, the figures ill diſpoſed, the manners obſcure or inconſiſtent, or the thoughts unnatural, then the fineſt colours are but dawbing, and the piece is a beautiful monſter at the beſt. Neither Virgil nor Homer were deficient in any of the former beauties; but in this laſt, which is expreſſion, the Roman poet is at leaſt equal to the Grecian, as I have ſaid elſewhere; ſupplying the poverty of his language by his muſical ear, and by his diligence. But to return: Our two great poets, being ſo different in their tempers, one choleric and ſanguine, the other phlegmatic and melancholic; that which makes them excel in their ſeveral ways, is, that each of them has followed his own natural inclination, as well in forming the deſign, as in the execution of it. The very heroes ſhew their authors; Achilles is hot, impatient, revengeful, *impiger*, *iracundus*, *inexorabilis*, *acer*,

&c. Æneas patient, conſiderate, careful of his people, and merciful to his enemies; ever ſubmiſſive to the will of heaven, *quo fata trahunt retrahuntque, ſequamur.* I could pleaſe myſelf with enlarging on this ſubject, but am forced to defer it to a fitter time. From all I have ſaid, I will only draw this inference, that the action of Homer, being more full of vigour than that of Virgil, according to the temper of the writer, is of conſequence more pleaſing to the reader. One warms you by degrees; the other ſets you on fire all at once, and never intermits his heat. 'Tis the ſame difference which Longinus makes betwixt the effects of eloquence in Demoſthenes and Tully. One perſuades; the other commands. You never cool while you read Homer, even not in the ſecond book, (a graceful flattery to his countrymen;) but he haſtens from the ſhips, and concludes not that book till he has made you all amends by the violent playing of a new machine. From thence he hurries on his action with variety of events, and ends it in leſs compaſs than two months. This vehemence of his, I confeſs, is more ſuitable to my temper: And therefore, I have tranſlated his firſt book with greater pleaſure than any part of Virgil: But it was not a pleaſure without pains: The continual agitations of the ſpirits, muſt needs be a weakening of any conſtitution, eſpecially in age: And many pauſes are required for refreſhments betwixt the heats; the Iliad, of itſelf, being a third part longer than all Virgil's works together.

This is what I thought needful in this place to ſay of Homer. I proceed to Ovid and Chaucer; conſidering the former only in relation to the latter. With Ovid

ended the golden age of the Roman tongue: From Chaucer the purity of the Engliſh tongue began. The manners of the poets were not unlike: Both of them were well-bred, well-natured, amorous, and libertine, at leaſt in their writings, it may be alſo in their lives. Their ſtudies were the ſame, philoſophy and philology. Both of them were knowing in aſtronomy, of which Ovid's books of the Roman-feaſts, and Chaucer's treatiſe of the Aſtrolabe, are ſufficient witneſſes. But Chaucer was likewiſe an aſtrologer, as were Virgil, Horace, Perſius, and Manilius. Both writ with wonderful facility and clearneſs; neither were great inventors: For Ovid only copied the Grecian fables; and moſt of Chaucer's ſtories were taken from his Italian contemporaries, or their predeceſſors: Boccace his Decameron was firſt publiſhed; and from thence our Engliſhman has borrowed many of his Canterbury tales: Yet that of Palamon and Arcite was written, in all probability, by ſome Italian wit, in a former age; as I ſhall prove hereafter: The tale of Grizild was the invention of Petrarch; by him ſent to Boccace; from whom it came to Chaucer: Troilus and Creſſida was alſo written by a Lombard author; but much amplified by our Engliſh tranſlator, as well as beautified; the genius of our countrymen in general being rather to improve an invention, than to invent themſelves; as is evident, not only in our poetry, but in many of our manufactures. I find I have anticipated already, and taken up Boccace before I come to him: But there is ſo much leſs behind; and I am of the temper of moſt kings, who love to be in debt, are all for preſent money, no matter how they pay it afterwards: Beſides,

the nature of a preface is rambling; never wholly out of the way, nor in it. This I have learned from the practice of honeſt Montaign, and return at my pleaſure to Ovid and Chaucer, of whom I have little more to ſay. Both of them built on the inventions of other men; yet, ſince Chaucer had ſomething of his own, as the Wife of Bath's tale, the Cock and the Fox, which I have tranſlated, and ſome others, I may juſtly give our countryman the precedence in that part; ſince I can remember nothing of Ovid which was wholly his. Both of them underſtood the manners; under which name I comprehend the paſſions, and, in a larger ſenſe, the deſcriptions of perſons, and their very habits: For an example, I ſee Baucis and Philemon as perfectly before me, as if ſome ancient painter had drawn them; and all the pilgrims in the Canterbury tales, their humours, their features, and the very dreſs, as diſtinctly as if I had ſupped with them at the Tabard in Southwark: Yet even there too the figures of Chaucer are much more lively, and ſet in a better light: which, tho' I have not time to prove; yet I appeal to the reader, and am ſure he will clear me from partiality. The thoughts and words remain to be conſidered, in the compariſon of the two poets; and I have ſaved myſelf one half of that labour, by owning that Ovid lived when the Roman tongue was in its meridian; Chaucer in the dawning of our language: Therefore, that part of the compariſon ſtands not on an equal foot, any more than the diction of Ennius and Ovid; or of Chaucer, and our preſent Engliſh. The words are given up, as a poſt not to be defended in our poet, becauſe he wanted the modern art of fortifying. The thoughts remain to be

conſidered: And they are to be meaſured only by their propriety; that is, as they flow more or leſs naturally from the perſons deſcribed, on ſuch and ſuch occaſions. The vulgar judges, which are nine parts in ten of all nations, who call conceits and jingles wit, who ſee Ovid full of them, and Chaucer altogether without them, will think me little leſs than mad, for preferring the Engliſhman to the Roman: Yet, with their leave, I muſt preſume to ſay, that the things they admire are only glittering trifles, and ſo far from being witty, that, in a ſerious poem, they are nauſeous, becauſe they are unnatural. Would any man, who is ready to die for love, deſcribe his paſſion like Narciſſus? Would he think of *inopem me copia fecit*, and a dozen more of ſuch expreſſions, poured on the neck of one another, and ſignifying all the ſame thing? If this were wit, was this a time to be witty, when the poor wretch was in the agony of death? This is juſt John Littlewit in Bartholomew Fair, who had a conceit (as he tells you) left him in his miſery; a miſerable conceit. On theſe occaſions, the poet ſhould endeavour to raiſe pity: But, inſtead of this, Ovid is tickling you to laugh. Virgil never made uſe of ſuch machines, when he was moving you to commiſerate the death of Dido: He would not deſtroy what he was building. Chaucer makes Arcite violent in his love, and unjuſt in the purſuit of it: Yet, when he came to die, he made him think more reaſonably: He repents not of his love, for that had altered his character; but acknowledges the injuſtice of his proceedings, and reſigns Emilia to Palamon. What would Ovid have done on this occaſion? he would certainly have made Arcite witty on his death-bed. He

had complained he was farther off from poſſeſſion, by being ſo near, and a thouſand ſuch boyiſms, which Chaucer rejected as below the dignity of the ſubject. They who think otherwiſe, would, by the ſame reaſon, prefer Lucian and Ovid to Homer and Virgil, and Martial to all four of them. As for the turn of words, in which Ovid particularly excels all poets; they are ſometimes a fault, and ſometimes a beauty, as they are uſed properly or improperly; but in ſtrong paſſions always to be ſhunned, becauſe paſſions are ſerious, and will admit no playing. The French have a high value for them; and I confeſs, they are often what they call delicate, when they are introduced with judgment; but Chaucer writ with more ſimplicity, and followed nature more cloſely, than to uſe them. I have thus far, to the beſt of my knowledge, been an upright judge betwixt the parties in competition, not meddling with the deſign nor the diſpoſition of it; becauſe the deſign was not their own; and in the diſpoſing of it they were equal. It remains that I ſay ſomewhat of Chaucer in particular.

In the firſt place, as he is the father of Engliſh poetry, ſo I hold him in the ſame degree of veneration as the Grecians held Homer, or the Romans Virgil: He is a perpetual fountain of good ſenſe; learn'd in all ſciences; and therefore ſpeaks properly on all ſubjects: As he knew what to ſay, ſo he knows alſo when to leave off; a continence which is practis'd by few writers, and ſcarcely by any of the ancients, excepting Virgil and Horace. One of our late great poets is ſunk in his reputation, becauſe he cou'd never forgive any conceit which came in his way; but ſwept, like a drag-net,

great and ſmall. There was plenty enough, but the diſhes were ill ſorted; whole pyramids of ſweet-meats, for boys and women; but little of ſolid meat, for men: All this proceeded not from any want of knowledge, but of judgment; neither did he want that in diſcerning the beauties and faults of other poets; but only indulg'd himſelf in the luxury of writing; and perhaps knew it was a fault, but hop'd the reader would not find it. For this reaſon, though he muſt always be thought a great poet, he is no longer eſteem'd a good writer; and for ten impreſſions, which his works have had in ſo many ſucceſſive years, yet at preſent a hundred books are ſcarcely purchas'd once a twelvemonth: For, as my laſt Lord Rocheſter ſaid, though ſomewhat profanely, *Not being of God, he could not ſtand.*

Chaucer follow'd nature every where; but was never ſo bold to go beyond her: And there is a great difference of being *poeta* and *nimis poeta*, if we may believe Catullus, as much as betwixt a modeſt behaviour and affectation. The verſe of Chaucer, I confeſs, is not harmonious to us; but 'tis like the eloquence of one whom Tacitus commends, it was *auribus iſtius temporis accommodata*: They who liv'd with him, and ſome time after him, thought it muſical; and it continues ſo even in our judgement, if compar'd with the numbers of Lidgate and Gower his contempories: There is the rude ſweetneſs of a Scotch tune in it, which is natural and pleaſing, though not perfect. 'Tis true, I cannot go ſo far as he who publiſh'd the laſt edition of him; for he would make us believe the fault is in our ears, and that there were really ten ſyllables in a verſe where we find but nine: But this opinion is not worth con-

futing; 'tis ſo groſs and obvious an error, that common ſenſe (which is a rule in every thing but matters of faith and revelation) muſt convince the reader, that equality of numbers in every verſe which we call heroic, was either not known, or not always practis'd in Chaucer's age. It were an eaſy matter to produce ſome thouſands of his verſes, which are lame for want of half a foot, and ſometimes a whole one, and which no pronounciation can make otherwiſe. We can only ſay, that he liv'd in the infancy of our poetry, and that nothing is brought to perfection at the firſt. We muſt be children before we grow men. There was an Ennius, and in proceſs of time a Lucilius, and a Lucretius, before Virgil and Horace; even after Chaucer, there was a Spencer, a Harrington, a Fairfax, before Waller and Denham were in being: And our numbers were in their nonage till theſe laſt appear'd. I need ſay little of his parentage, life, and fortunes: They are to be found at large in all the editions of his works. He was employ'd abroad, and favour'd by Edward the third, Richard the ſecond, and Henry the fourth, and was poet, as I ſuppoſe, to all three of them. In Richard's time, I doubt, he was a little dipt in the rebellion of the Commons; and being brother-in-law to John of Ghaunt, it was no wonder if he follow'd the fortunes of that family; and was well with Henry the fourth when he had depos'd his predeceſſor. Neither is it to be admir'd, that Henry, who was a wiſe as well as a valiant Prince, who claim'd by ſucceſſion, and was ſenſible that his title was not ſound, but was rightfully in Mortimer, who had married the heir of York; it was not to be admir'd, I ſay, if that great politician ſhould be pleas'd

to have the greateſt wit of thoſe times in his intereſts, and to be the trumpet of his praiſes. Auguſtus had given him the example, by the advice of Mecaenas, who recommended Virgil and Horace to him; whoſe praiſes helped to make him popular while he was alive, and after his death have made him precious to poſterity. As for the religion of our Poet, he ſeems to have ſome little bias towards the opinions of Wickliff, after John of Ghaunt his patron; ſomewhat of which appears in the tale of Piers Plowman; yet I cannot blame him for inveighing ſo ſharply againſt the vices of the clergy in his age: Their pride, their ambition, their pomp, their avarice, their worldly intereſt, deſerved the laſhes which he gave them, both in that, and in moſt of his Canterbury tales: Neither has his contemporary Boccace ſpared them. Yet both thoſe Poets lived in much eſteem, with good and holy men in orders: For the ſcandal which is given by particular prieſts, reflects not on the ſacred function. Chaucer's Monk, his Chanon, and his Fryar, took not from the character of his Good Parſon. A ſatyrical poet is the check of the laymen on bad prieſts. We are only to take care, that we involve not the innocent with the guilty in the ſame condemnation. The good cannot be too much honoured, nor the bad too coarſely uſed; for the corruption of the beſt becomes the worſt. When a clergy-man is whipped, his gown is firſt taken off, by which the dignity of his order is ſecured: If he be wrongfully accuſed, he has his action of ſlander; and 'tis at the poet's peril, if he tranſgreſs the law. But they will tell us, that all kind of ſatire, though never ſo well deſerved by particular

priests, yet brings the whole order into contempt. Is then the peerage of England any thing dishonoured, when a peer suffers for his treason? If he be libelled, or any way defamed, he has his *Scandalum Magnatum* to punish the offender. They who use this kind of argument, seem to be conscious to themselves of somewhat which has deserved the poet's lash; and are less concerned for their public capacity, than for their private; at least, there is pride at the bottom of their reasoning. If the faults of men in orders are only to be judged among themselves, they are all in some sort parties: For, since they say the honour of their order is concerned in every member of it, how can we be sure, that they will be impartial judges? How far I may be allowed to speak my opinion in this case, I know not: But I am sure a dispute of this nature caused mischief in abundance betwixt a King of England and an Archbishop of Canterbury; one standing up for the laws of his land, and the other for the honour (as he called it) of God's Church; which ended in the murther of the Prelate, and in the whipping of his Majesty from post to pillar for his penance. The learned and ingenious Dr Drake has saved me the labour of inquiring into the esteem and reverence which the priests have had of old; and I would rather extend than diminish any part of it: Yet I must needs say, that, when a priest provokes me without any occasion given him, I have no reason, unless it be the charity of a Christian, to forgive him: *Prior laesit* is justification sufficient in the civil law. If I answer him in his own language, self-defence, I am sure, must be allowed me; and if I carry it farther, even to a sharp recrimination,

ſomewhat may be indulged to human frailty. Yet my reſentment has not wrought ſo far, but that I have followed Chaucer in his character of a holy man, and have enlarged on that ſubject with ſome pleaſure, reſerving to myſelf the right, if I ſhall think fit hereafter, to deſcribe another ſort of prieſts, ſuch as are more eaſily to be found than the good parſon; ſuch as have given the laſt blow to Chriſtianity in this age, by a practice ſo contrary to their doctrine. But this will keep cold till another time. In the mean while, I take up Chaucer where I left him. He muſt have been a man of a moſt wonderful comprehenſive nature, becauſe, as it has been truly obſerved of him, he has taken into the compaſs of his Canterbury tales the various manners and humours (as we now call them) of the whole Engliſh nation, in his age. Not a ſingle character has eſcaped him. All his pilgrims are ſeverally diſtinguiſhed from each other; and not only in their inclinations, but in their very phyſiognomies, and perſons. Baptiſta Porta could not have deſcribed their natures better, than by the marks which the poet gives them. The matter and manner of their tales, and of their telling, are ſo ſuited to their different educations, humours, and callings, that each of them would be improper in any other mouth. Even the grave and ſerious characters are diſtinguiſhed by their ſeveral ſorts of gravity: Their diſcourſes are ſuch as belong to their age, their calling, and their breeding; ſuch as are becoming of them, and of them only. Some of his perſons are vicious, and ſome virtuous; ſome are unlearned, or (as Chaucer calls them) lewd, and ſome are learned. Even the ribaldry of the low characters is

different: The Reeve, the Miller, and the Cook, are ſeveral men, and diſtinguiſhed from each other, as much as the mincing Lady Prioreſs, and the broad-ſpeaking gap-tooth'd Wife of Bath. But enough of this: There is ſuch a variety of game ſpringing up before me, that I am diſtracted in my choice, and know not which to follow. 'Tis ſufficient to ſay, according to the proverb, that here is God's plenty. We have our fore-fathers and great grand-dames all before us, as they were in Chaucer's days; their general characters are ſtill remaining in mankind, and even in England, though they are called by other names than thoſe of monks, and fryars, and chanons, and lady abbeſſes, and nuns; for mankind is ever the ſame, and nothing loſt out of nature, though every thing is altered. May I have leave to do myſelf the juſtice, (ſince my enemies will do me none, and are ſo far from granting me to be a good poet, that they will not allow me ſo much as to be a Chriſtian, or a moral man), may I have leave, I ſay, to inform my reader, that I have confined my choice to ſuch tales of Chaucer as ſavour nothing of immodeſty. If I had deſired more to pleaſe than to inſtruct, the Reeve, the Miller, the Shipman, the Merchant, the Sumner, and above all, the Wife of Bath, in the prologue to her tale, would have procured me as many friends and readers, as there are beaux and ladies of pleaſure in the town. But I will no more offend againſt good manners: I am ſenſible, as I ought to be, of the ſcandal I have given by my looſe writings; and make what reparation I am able, by this public acknowledgment. If any thing of this nature, or of profaneneſs, be crept into theſe poems, I am ſo far

from defending it, that I disown it: *Totum hoc indictum volo.* Chaucer makes another manner of apology for his broad-speaking, and Boccace makes the like; but I will follow neither of them. Our countryman, in the end of his characters, before the Canterbury tales, thus excuses the ribaldry, which is very gross, in many of his novels.

Ent first, I pray you, of your courtesy,
That ye ne arrete it nought my villany,
Though that I plainly speak in this mattere
To tellen you her words, and eke her chere:
Ne though I speak her words properly,
For this ye knowen as well as I,
Who shall tellen a tale after a man,
He mote rehearse as nye as ever he can:
Everich word of it been in his charge,
All speke he, never so rudely, ne large.
Or else he mote teilen his tale untrue,
Or feine things, or find words new:
He may not spare, altho he were his brother,
He mote as well say o word as another.
Christ spake himself full broad in holy writ,
And well I wote no villany is it.
Eke Plato saith, who so can him rede,
The words mote been cousin to the dede.

Yet if a man should have enquired of Boccace or of Chaucer, what need they had of introducing such characters, where obscene words were proper in their mouths, but very undecent to be heard, I know not what answer they could have made; for that reason, such tales shall be left untold by me. You have here a specimen of Chaucer's language, which is so obsolete,

that his ſenſe is ſcarce to be underſtood; and you have likewiſe more than one example of his unequal numbers, which were mentioned before. Yet many of his verſes conſiſt of ten ſyllables, and the words not much behind our preſent Engliſh: As for example, theſe two lines, in the deſcription of the carpenter's young young wife:

Wincing ſhe was, as is a jolly colt,
Long as a maſt, and upright as a bolt.

I have almoſt done with Chaucer, when I have anſwered ſome objections relating to my preſent work. I find ſome people are offended that I have turned theſe tales into modern Engliſh; becauſe they think them unworthy of my pains, and look on Chaucer as a dry, old-faſhioned wit, not worth receiving. I have often heard the late Earl of Leiceſter ſay, that Mr Cowley himſelf was of that opinion; who having read him over at my Lord's requeſt, declared he had no taſte of him. I dare not advance my opinion againſt the judgment of ſo great an author; but I think it fair, however, to leave the deciſion to the public: Mr Cowley was too modeſt to ſet up for a dictator; and being ſhocked perhaps with his old ſtyle, never examined into the depth of his good ſenſe. Chaucer, I confeſs, is a rough diamond, and muſt firſt be poliſhed e'er he ſhines. I deny not likewiſe, that, living in our early days of poetry, he writes not always of a piece; but ſometimes mingles trivial things with thoſe of greater moment. Sometimes alſo, though not often, he runs riot, like Ovid, and knows not when he has ſaid enough. But there are more great wits, beſide Chaucer, whoſe fault is their exceſs of conceits, and thoſe ill ſorted. An author is not to

write all he can, but only all he ought. Having obſerved this redundancy in Chaucer, (as it is an eaſy matter for a man of ordinary parts to find a fault in one of greater), I have not tied myſelf to a literal tranſlation; but have often omitted what I judged unneceſſary, or not of dignity enough to appear in the company of better thoughts. I have preſumed farther in ſome places, and added ſomewhat of my own, where I thought my author was deficient, and had not given his thoughts their true luſtre, for want of words in the beginning of our language. And to this I was the more emboldened, becauſe, (if I may be permitted to ſay it of myſelf), I found I had a ſoul congenial to his, and that I had been converſant in the ſame ſtudies. Another Poet, in another age, may take the ſame liberty with my writings, if at leaſt they live long enough to deſerve correction. It was alſo neceſſary ſometimes to reſtore the ſenſe of Chaucer, which was loſt or mangled in the errors of the preſs: Let this example ſuffice at preſent in the ſtory of Palamon and Arcite, where the temple of Diana is deſcribed, you find theſe verſes, in all the editions of our author:

There ſaw I Dane turned unto a tree,
I mean not the goddeſs Diane,
But Venus daughter, which that hight Dane.

Which after a little conſideration I knew was to be reformed into this ſenſe, that Daphne the daughter of Peneus was turned into a tree. I durſt not make thus bold with Ovid, leſt ſome future Milbourn ſhould ariſe, and ſay, I varied from my author, becauſe I underſtood him not.

But there are other judges who think I ought not to have tranſlated Chaucer into Engliſh, out of a quite contrary notion: They ſuppoſe there is a certain veneration due to his old language; and that it is little leſs than profanation and ſacrilege to alter it. They are farther of opinion, that ſomewhat of his good ſenſe will ſuffer in this transfuſion, and much of the beauty of his thoughts will infallibly be loſt, which appear with more grace in their old habit. Of this opinion was that excellent perſon, whom I mentioned, the late Earl of Leiceſter, who valued Chaucer as much as Cowley deſpiſed him. My Lord diſſuaded me from this attempt, (for I was thinking of it ſome years before his death), and his authority prevailed ſo far with me, as to defer my undertaking while he lived, in deference to him; yet my reaſon was not convinced with what he urged againſt it. If the firſt end of a writer be to be underſtood, then, as his language grows obſolete, his thoughts muſt grow obſcure, *multa renaſcuntur quae nunc cecidere, cadentque quae nunc ſunt in honore vocabula, ſi volet uſus; quem penes arbitrium eſt et jus et norma loquendi.* When an ancient word, for its ſound and ſignificancy, deſerves to be reviv'd, I have that reaſonable veneration for antiquity to reſtore it. All beyond this is ſuperſtition. Words are not like land-marks, ſo ſacred as never to be remov'd: Cuſtoms are chang'd, and even ſtatutes are ſilently repeal'd, when the reaſon ceaſes for which they were enacted. As for the other part of the argument, that his thoughts will loſe of their original beauty, by the innovation of words; in the firſt place, not only their beauty, but their being is loſt, where they are no

longer underſtood, which is the preſent caſe. I grant, that ſomething muſt be loſt in all transfuſion, that is, in all tranſlations; but the ſenſe will remain, which would otherwiſe be loſt, or at leaſt be maim'd, when it is ſcarce intelligible; and that but to a few. How few are there who can read Chaucer, ſo as to underſtand him perfectly? and if imperfectly, then with leſs profit, and no pleaſure. 'Tis not for the uſe of ſome old Saxon friends, that I have taken theſe pains with him; let them neglect my verſion, becauſe they have no need of it. I made it for their ſakes who underſtand ſenſe and poetry as well as they, when that poetry and ſenſe is put into words which they underſtand. I will go farther, and dare to add, that what beauties I loſe in ſome places, I give to others which had them not originally: But in this I may be partial to myſelf; let the reader judge, and I ſubmit to his deciſion. Yet I think I have juſt occaſion to complain of them, who, becauſe they underſtand Chaucer, would deprive the greater part of their countrymen of the ſame advantage, and hoard him up, as miſers do their grandam gold, only to look on it themſelves, and hinder others from making uſe of it. In ſum, I ſeriouſly proteſt, that no man ever had, or can have, a greater veneration for Chaucer than myſelf. I have tranſlated ſome part of his works, only that I might perpetuate his memory, or at leaſt refreſh it, amongſt my countrymen. If I have altered him any where for the better, I muſt at the ſame time acknowledge, that I could have done nothing without him: *Facile eſt inventis addere*, is no great commendation; and I am not ſo vain to think I have deſerv'd a greater. I

will conclude what I have to say of him singly, with this one remark: A lady of my acquaintance, who keeps a kind of correspondence with some authors of the fair sex in France, has been inform'd by them, that Mademoiselle de Scudery, who is as old as Sibyl, and inspir'd like her by the same god of poetry, is at this time translating Chaucer into modern French. From which I gather, that he has been formerly translated into the old Provencal, (for how she should come to understand old English, I know not.) But the matter of fact being true, it makes me think, that there is something in it like fatality; that, after certain periods of time, the fame and memory of great wits should be renew'd, as Chaucer is both in France and England. If this be wholly chance, 'tis extraordinary; and I dare not call it more, for fear of being tax'd with superstition.

Boccace comes last to be considered, who, living in the same age with Chaucer, had the same genius, and followed the same studies. Both writ novels, and each of them cultivated his mother-tongue. But the greatest resemblance of our two modern authors being in their familiar style, and pleasing way of relating comical familiar adventures, I may pass it over, because I have translated nothing from Boccace of that nature. In the serious part of poetry, the advantage is wholly on Chaucer's side; for though the Englishman has borrowed many tales from the Italian, yet it appears that those of Boccace were not generally of his own making, but taken from authors of former ages, and by him only modelled: So that what there was of invention in either of them may be judged equal.

But Chaucer has refined on Boccace, and has mended the ſtories which he has borrowed, in his way of telling; though proſe allows more liberty of thought, and the expreſſion is more eaſy, when unconfined by numbers. Our countryman carries weight, and yet wins the race at diſadvantage. I deſire not the reader ſhould take my word; and therefore I will ſet two of their diſcourſes on the ſame ſubject, in the ſame light, for every man to judge betwixt them. I tranſlated Chaucer firſt, and amongſt the reſt, pitched on the Wife of Bath's tale; not daring, as I have ſaid, to adventure on her prologue, becauſe it is too licentious: There Chaucer introduces an old woman of mean parentage, whom a youthful Knight of noble blood was forced to marry, and conſequently loathed her. The crone being in bed with him on the wedding night, and finding his averſion, endeavours to win his affection by reaſon, and ſpeaks a good word for herſelf, (as who could blame her?) in hope to mollify the ſullen bridegroom. She takes her topiques from the benefits of poverty, the advantages of old age and ugglineſs, the vanity of youth, and the ſilly pride of anceſtry and titles without inherent virtue, which is the true nobility. When I had cloſed Chaucer, I returned to Ovid, and tranſlated ſome more of his fables; and by this time had ſo far forgotten the Wife of Bath's tale, that when I took up Boccace, unawares I fell on the ſame argument of preferring virtue to nobility of blood, and titles, in the ſtory of Sigiſmonda; which I had certainly avoided, for the reſemblance of the two diſcourſes, if my memory had not failed me. Let the reader weigh them both; and if he

thinks me partial to Chaucer, it is in him to right Boccace.

I prefer in our countryman, far above all his other ſtories, the noble poem of Palamon and Arcite, which is of the epic kind, and perhaps not much inferior to the Ilias or the Æneis: The ſtory is more pleaſing than either of them, the manners as perfect, the diction as poetical, the learning as deep and various; and the diſpoſition full as artful: Only it includes a greater length of time, as taking up ſeven years at leaſt; but Ariſtotle has left undecided the duration of the action; which is yet eaſily reduced into the compaſs of a year, by a narration of what preceded the return of Palamon to Athens. I had thought, for the houour of our nation, and more particularly for his whoſe laurel, though unworthy, I have worn after him, that this ſtory was of Engliſh growth, and Chaucer's own: But I was undeceived by Boccace; for, caſually looking on the end of his ſeventh Giornata, I found Dioneo (under which name he ſhadows himſelf) and Fiametta (who repreſents his miſtreſs, the natural daughter of Robert King of Naples,) of whom theſe words are ſpoken. *Dioneo e Fiametta gran pezza cantarono inſieme d' Arcita, e di Palamone:* By which it appears that this ſtory was written before the time of Boccace; but the name of its author being wholly loſt, Chaucer is now become an original; and I queſtion not but the poem has received many beauties by paſſing through his noble hands. Beſides this tale, there is another of his own invention, after the manner of the Provencalls, called the Flower and the Leaf; with which I was ſo particularly pleaſed, both for the invention and the moral,

that I cannot hinder myſelf from recommending it to the reader.

As a corollary to this preface, in which I have done juſtice to others, I owe ſomewhat to myſelf: Not that I think it worth my time to enter the liſts with one M------, or one B------, but barely to take notice, that ſuch men there are, who have written ſcurrilouſly againſt me without any prøvocation. M-------, who is in orders, pretends, amongſt the reſt, this quarrel to me, that I have fallen foul on prieſthood: If I have, I am only to aſk pardon of good prieſts, and am afraid his part of the reparation will come to little. Let him be ſatisfied, that he ſhall not be able to force himſelf upon me for an adverſary. I contemn him too much to enter into competition with him. His own tranſlations of Virgil have anſwered his criticiſms on mine. If (as they ſay, he has declared in print) he prefers the verſion of Ogilby to mine, the world has made him the ſame compliment: For 'tis agreed on all hands, that he writes even below Ogilby. That, you will ſay, is not eaſily to be done; but what cannot M-------- bring about? I am ſatisfied, however, that, while he and I live together, I ſhall not be thought the worſt poet of the age. It looks as if I had deſired him underhand to write ſo ill againſt me; but upon my honeſt word I have not bribed him to do me this ſervice, and am wholly guiltleſs of his pamphlet. 'Tis true, I ſhould be glad if I could perſuade him to continue his good offices, and write ſuch another critic on any thing of mine; for I find by experience he has a great ſtroke with the reader, when he condemns any of my poems, to make the world have a better opinion of them. He

has taken ſome pains with my poetry; but no body will be perſuaded to take the ſame with his. If I had taken to the church, (as he affirms, but which was never in my thoughts), I ſhould have had more ſenſe, if not more grace, than to have turned myſelf out of my benefice by writing libels on my pariſhioners. But his account of my manners and my principles are of a piece with his cavils and his poetry; and ſo I have done with him for ever.

As for the city-bard, or knight-phyſician, I hear his quarrel to me is, that I was the author of Abſalom and Achitophel, which he thinks is a little hard on his fanatic patrons in London.

But I will deal the more civilly with his two poems, becauſe nothing ill is to be ſpoken of the dead; and therefore, peace be to the manes of his Arthurs. I will only ſay, that it was not for this noble knight that I drew the plan of an epic poem on King Arthur, in my preface to the tranſlation of Juvenal. The guardian-angels of kingdoms were machines too ponderous for him to manage; and therefore he rejected them, as Dares did the whirlbats of Eryx, when they were thrown before him by Entellus; yet from that preface he plainly took his hint; for he began immediately upon the ſtory, tho' he had the baſeneſs not to acknowledge his benefactor, but, inſtead of it, to traduce me in a libel.

I ſhall ſay the leſs of Mr Collier, becauſe, in many things, he has tax'd me juſtly; and I have pleaded guilty to all thoughts and expreſſions of mine, which can be truly argued of obſcenity, profaneneſs, or immorality; and retract them. If he be my enemy, let him triumph; if he be my friend, as I have given him

no perſonal occaſion to be otherwiſe, he will be glad of my repentance. It becomes me not to draw my pen in the defence of a bad cauſe, when I have ſo often drawn it for a good one. Yet it were not difficult to prove, that, in many places, he has perverted my meaning by his gloſſes, and interpreted my words into blaſphemy and baudry, of which they were not guilty. Beſides that, he is too much given to horſe-play in his raillery; and comes to battle, like a dictator from the plough. I will not ſay, *the zeal of God's houſe has eaten him up*; but I am ſure it has devoured ſome part of his good manners and civility. It might alſo be doubted, whether it were altogether zeal which prompted him to this rough manner of proceeding: Perhaps it became not one of his function to rake into the rubbiſh of ancient and modern plays; a divine might have employed his pains to better purpoſe, than in the naſtineſs of Plautus and Ariſtophanes; whoſe examples, as they excuſe not me, ſo it might be poſſibly ſuppoſed that he read them not without ſome pleaſure. They who have written commentaries on thoſe poets, or on Horace, Juvenal, and Martial, have explained ſome vices, which, without their interpretation, had been unknown to modern times. Neither has he judged impartially betwixt the former age and us.

There is more baudry in one play of Fletcher's, called The Cuſtom of the Country, than in all ours together. Yet this has been often acted on the ſtage in my remembrance. Are the times ſo much more reformed now than they were five and twenty years ago? If they are, I congratulate the amendment of our morals. But I am not to prejudice the cauſe of my fellow-poets, tho'

I abandon my own defence: They have ſome of them anſwered for themſelves, and neither they nor I can think Mr Collier ſo formidable an enemy, that we ſhould ſhun him. He has loſt ground at the latter end of the day, by purſuing his point too far, like the Prince of Conde at the battle of Senneph: From immoral plays, to no plays; *ab abuſu ad uſum, non valet conſequentia.* But, being a party, I am not to erect myſelf into a judge. As for the reſt of thoſe who have written againſt me, they are ſuch ſcoundrels, that they deſerve not the leaſt notice to be taken of them. B------ and M------- are only diſtinguiſhed from the crowd, by being remembered to their infamy.

--------Demetri, teque, Tigelli,
Diſcipularum inter jubeo plorare cathedras.

TO

HER GRACE

THE

DUTCHESS

OF

ORMOND,

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

MADAM,

THE bard who firſt adorn'd our native tongue
Tun'd to his Britiſh lyre this ancient ſong:
Which Homer might without a bluſh rehearſe,
And leaves a doubtful palm in Virgil's verſe:
He match'd their beauties, where they moſt excel;
Of love ſung better, and of arms as well.
Vouchſafe, illuſtrious Ormond, to behold
What pow'r the charms of beauty had of old;
Nor wonder if ſuch deeds of arms were done,
Inſpir'd by two fair eyes, that ſparkled like your own.
If Chaucer by the beſt idea wrought,
And poets can divine each others thought,
The faireſt nymph before his eyes he ſet;
And then the faireſt was Plantagenet;
Who three contending princes made her prize,
And rul'd the rival nations with her eyes;

Who left immortal trophies of her fame,
And to the nobleſt order gave the name.
Like her, of equal kindred to the throne,
You keep her conqueſts, and extend your own:
As when the ſtars, in their etherial race,
At length have roll'd around the liquid ſpace,
At certain periods they reſume their place,
From the ſame point of heav'n their courſe advance,
And move in meaſures of their former dance:
Thus, after length of ages, ſhe returns,
Reſtor'd in you, and the ſame place adorns;
Or you perform her office in the ſphere,
Born of her blood, and make a new Platonic year.
O true Plantagenet, O race divine,
(For beauty ſtill is fatal to the line,)
Had Chaucer liv'd that angel-face to view,
Sure he had drawn his Emily from you:
Or had you liv'd, to judge the doubtful right,
Your noble Palamon had been the knight:
And conqu'ring Theſeus from his ſide had ſent
Your gen'rous lord, to guide the Theban government.
Time ſhall accompliſh that; and I ſhall ſee
A Palamon in him, in you an Emily.
Already have the Fates your path prepar'd,
And ſure preſage your future ſway declar'd:
When weſtard, like the ſun, you took your way,
And from benighted Britain bore the day,
Blue Triton gave the ſignal from the ſhore,
The ready Nereids heard, and ſwam before,
To ſmooth the ſeas; a ſoft Eteſian gale
But juſt inſpir'd, and gently ſwell'd the ſail;

Portunus took his turn, whoſe ample hand
Heav'd up the lighten'd keel, and ſunk the ſand,
And ſteer'd the ſacred veſſel ſafe to land.
The land, if not reſtrain'd, had met your way,
Projected out a neck, and jutted to the ſea.
Hibernia, proſtrate at your feet, ador'd,
In you, the pledge of her expected Lord;
Due to her iſle; a venerable name;
His father and his grandſire known to fame:
Aw'd by that houſe, accuſtom'd to command,
The ſturdy Kerns in due ſubjection ſtand;
Nor bear the reigns in any foreign hand.
At your approach, they crowded to the port;
And ſcarcely landed, you create a court:
As Ormond's harbinger, to you they run;
For Venus is the promiſe of the Sun.
The waſte of civil wars, their towns deſtroy'd,
Pales unhonour'd, Ceres unemploy'd,
Were all forgot; and one triumphant day
Wip'd all the tears of three campaigns away.
Blood, rapines, maſſacres, were cheaply bought,
So mighty recompence your beauty brought.
As when the dove returning, bore the mark
Of earth reſtor'd to the long-lab'ring ark,
The relics of mankind, ſecure of reſt,
Op'd ev'ry window to receive the gueſt,
And the fair bearer of the meſſage bleſs'd:
So, when you came, with loud repeated cries,
The nation took an omen from your eyes,
And God advanc'd his rainbow in the ſkies,
To ſign inviolable peace reſtor'd; [cord.
The ſaints with ſolemn ſhouts proclaim'd the new ac-

When at your ſecond coming you appear,
(For I foretel that millenary year)
The ſharpen'd ſhare ſhall vex the ſoil no more,
But earth unbidden ſhall produce her ſtore:
The land ſhall laugh, the circling ocean ſmile,
And Heav'n's indulgence bleſs the holy iſle.
Heav'n from all ages has reſerv'd for you
That happy clime, which venom never knew;
Or, if it had been there, your eyes alone
Have pow'r to chaſe all poiſon, but their own.
Now in this interval, which Fate has caſt
Betwixt your future glories, and your paſt,
This pauſe of pow'r, 'tis Ireland's hour to mourn;
While England celebrates your ſafe return,
By which you ſeem the ſeaſons to command,
And bring our ſummers back to their forſaken land.
The vanquiſh'd iſle our leiſure muſt attend,
Till the fair bleſſing we vouchſafe to ſend;
Nor can we ſpare you long, tho' often we may lend.
The dove was twice employ'd abroad, before
The world was dry'd; and ſhe return'd no more.
Nor dare we truſt ſo ſoft a meſſenger,
New from her ſickneſs to that northern air;
Reſt here a while, your luſtre to reſtore,
That they may ſee you as you ſhone before:
For yet, th' eclipſe not wholly paſt, you wade
Thro' ſome remains, and dimneſs of a ſhade.
A ſubject in his prince may claim a right,
Nor ſuffer him with ſtrength impair'd to fight;
Till force returns, his ardour we reſtrain,
And curb his warlike wiſh to croſs the main.

Now paſt the danger, let the learn'd begin
Th' enquiry, where diſeaſe could enter in;
How thoſe malignant atoms forc'd their way, [prey?
What in the faultleſs frame they found to make their
Where ev'ry element was weigh'd ſo well,
That Heav'n alone, who mix'd the maſs, could tell
Which of the four ingredients could rebel;
And where, impriſon'd in ſo ſweet a cage,
A ſoul might well be pleas'd to paſs an age.
And yet the fine materials made it weak;
Porcelain by being pure, is apt to break:
Ev'n to your breaſt the ſickneſs durſt aſpire;
And forc'd from that fair temple to retire,
Profanely ſet the holy place on fire.
In vain your Lord like young Veſpaſian mourn'd,
When the fierce flames the ſanctuary burn'd;
And I prepar'd to pay in verſes rude
A moſt deteſted act of gratitude:
Ev'n this had been your elegy, which now
Is offer'd for your health, the table of my vow.
Your angel ſure our Morley's mind inſpir'd,
To find the remedy your ill requir'd;
As once the Macedon, by Jove's decree,
Was taught to dream an herb for Ptolomee:
Or Heav'n, which had ſuch over-coſt beſtow'd,
As ſcarce it could afford to fleſh and blood,
So lik'd the frame, he would not work anew,
To ſave the charges of another you.
Or by his middle ſcience did he ſteer,
And ſaw ſome great contingent good appear,
Well worth a miracle to keep you here:

And for that end, preſerv'd the precious mould,
Which all the future Ormonds was to hold;
And meditated in his better mind
An heir from you, who may redeem the failing kind.
Bleſs'd be the pow'r which has at once reſtor'd
The hopes of loſt ſucceſſion to your Lord,
Joy to the firſt, and laſt of each degree,
Virtue to courts, and what I long'd to ſee,
To you the Graces, and the Muſe to me.
O daughter of the Roſe, whoſe cheeks unite
The diff'ring titles of the Red and White;
Who Heav'n's alternate beauty well diſplay,
The bluſh of morning, and the milky way;
Whoſe face is Paradiſe, but fenc'd from ſin:
For God in either eye has plac'd a Cherubin.
All is your Lord's alone; ev'n abſent, he
Employs the care of chaſte Penelope.
For him you waſte in tears your widow'd hours,
For him your curious needle paints the flow'rs:
Such works of old imperial dames were taught;
Such for Aſcanius fair Eliſa wrought.
The ſoft receſſes of your hours improve
The three fair pledges of your happy love:
All other parts of pious duty done,
You owe your Ormond nothing but a ſon;
To fill in future times his Father's place,
And wear the garter of his Mother's race.

PALAMON
AND
ARCITE.

OR,

THE KNIGHT's TALE,

FROM CHAUCER.

IN THREE BOOKS.

BOOK I.

IN days of old, there liv'd, of mighty fame,
A valiant prince; and Theſeus was his name:
A chief, who more in feats of arms excell'd
The riſing nor the ſetting ſun beheld.
Of Athens he was lord; much land he won,
And added foreign countries to his crown:
In Scythia with the warrior Queen he ſtrove,
Whom firſt by force he conquer'd, then by love;
He brought in triumph back the beauteous dame,
With whom her ſiſter, fair Emilia, came.
With honour to his home let Theſeus ride,
With love to friend, and fortune for his guide,
And his victorious army at his ſide.
I paſs their warlike pomp, their proud array,
Their ſhouts, their ſongs, their welcome on the way:

But, were it not too long, I would recite
The feats of Amazons, the fatal fight
Betwixt the hardy Queen, and heroe knight;
The town beſieg'd, and how much blood it coſt
The female army, and th' Athenian hoſt;
The ſpouſals of Hippolita the Queen;
What tilts, and tourneys at the feaſt were ſeen;
The ſtorm at their return, the ladies fear:
But theſe and other things I muſt forbear.
The field is ſpacious I deſign to ſow,
With oxen far unfit to draw the plow:
The remnant of my tale is of a length
To tire your patience, and to waſte my ſtrength;
And trivial accidents ſhall be forborn,
That others may have time to take their turn;
As was at firſt enjoin'd us by mine hoſt:
That he whoſe tale is beſt, and pleaſes moſt,
Should win his ſupper at our common coſt.

And therefore where I left, I will purſue
This ancient ſtory, whether falſe or true,
In hope it may be mended with a new.
The prince I mention'd, full of high renown,
In this array drew near th' Athenian town;
When in his pomp and utmoſt of his pride,
Marching, he chanc'd to caſt his eye aſide,
And ſaw a quire of mourning dames, who lay
By two and two acroſs the common way:
At his approach they rais'd a rueful cry,
And beat their breaſts, and held their hands on high,
Creeping and crying, till they ſeiz'd at laſt
His courſer's bridle, and his feet embrac'd.

Tell me, said Theseus, what and whence you are,
And why this funeral pageant you prepare?
Is this the welcome of my worthy deeds,
Too meet my triumph in ill-omen'd weeds?
Or envy you my praise, and would destroy
With grief my pleasures, and pollute my joy?
Or are you injur'd, and demand relief?
Name your request, and I will ease your grief.
The most in years of all the mourning train
Began; (but swounded first away for pain)
Then, scarce recover'd, spoke: Nor envy we
Thy great renown, nor grudge thy victory;
'Tis thine, O King, th' afflicted to redress,
And fame has fill'd the world with thy success:
We wretched women sue for that alone,
Which of thy goodness is refus'd to none:
Let fall some drops of pity on our grief,
If what we beg be just, and we deserve relief:
For none of us, who now thy grace implore,
But held the rank of Sovereign Queen before;
Till, thanks to giddy Chance, which never bears
That mortal bliss should last for length of years,
She cast us headlong from our high estate;
And here in hope of thy return we wait:
And long have waited in the temple nigh,
Built to the gracious goddess Clemency.
But rev'rence thou the pow'r whose name it bears,
Relieve th' oppress, and wipe the widows tears.
I, wretched I, have other fortune seen,
The wife of Capaneus, and once a Queen:
At Thebes he fell; curs'd be the fatal day!
And all the rest thou seest in this array,

To make their moan, their lords in battle loſt;
Before that town beſieg'd by our confed'rate hoſt.
But Creon, old and impious, who commands
The Theban city, and uſurps the lands,
Denies the rites of fun'ral fires to thoſe
Whoſe breathleſs bodies yet he calls his foes.
Unburn'd, unbury'd, on a heap they lie:
Such is their fate, and ſuch his tyranny;
No friend has leave to bear away the dead,
But with their lifeleſs limbs his hounds are fed;
At this ſhe ſhriek'd aloud, the mournful train
Echo'd her grief, and grov'ling on the plain,
With groans, and hands upheld, to move his mind,
Beſought his pity to their helpleſs kind!
The prince was touch'd, his tears began to flow,
And, as his tender heart would break in two,
He ſigh'd; and could not but their fate deplore,
So wretched now, ſo fortunate before.
Then lightly from his lofty ſteed he flew,
And raiſing one by one the ſuppliant crew,
To comfort each, full ſolemnly he ſwore,
That by the faith which knights to knighthood bore,
And whate'er elſe to chivalry belongs,
He would not ceaſe, till he reveng'd their wrongs;
That Greece ſhould ſee perform'd what he declar'd,
And cruel Creon finds his juſt reward.
He ſaid no more, but ſhunning all delay,
Rode on; nor enter'd Athens on his way;
But left his ſiſter and his Queen behind,
And wav'd his royal banner in the wind;
Where in an argent field the god of war
Was drawn triumphant on his iron carr;

Red was his ſword, and ſhield, and whole attire,
And all the godhead ſeem'd to glow with fire;
Ev'n the ground glitter'd where the ſtandard flew,
And the green graſs was dy'd to ſanguine hue.
High on his pointed lance his pennon bore
His Cretan fight, the conquer'd Minotaur;
The ſoldiers ſhout around with generous rage,
And in that victory, their own preſage.
He prais'd their ardour; inly pleas'd to ſee
His hoſt the flow'r of Grecian chivalry.
All day he march'd; and all th' enſuing night;
And ſaw the city with returning light.
The proceſs of the war I need not tell,
How Theſeus conquer'd, and how Creon fell;
Or after, how by ſtorm the walls were won,
Or how the victor ſack'd and burn'd the town;
How to the ladies he reſtor'd again
The bodies of their lords in battle ſlain;
And with what ancient rites they were interr'd;
All theſe to fitter time ſhall be deferr'd:
I ſpare the widows tears, their woful cries
And howling at their huſbands obſequies;
How Theſeus at theſe fun'rals did aſſiſt,
And with what gifts the mourning dames diſmiſs'd.
Thus when the victor chief had Creon ſlain,
And conquer'd Thebes, he pitch'd upon the plain
His mighty camp, and when the day return'd,
The country waſted, and the hamlets burn'd;
And left the pillagers, to rapine bred,
Without controul to ſtrip and ſpoil the dead.
There, in a heap of ſlain, amongſt the reſt [preſs'd
Two youthful knights they found beneath a load op-

Of ſlaughter'd foes, whom firſt to death they ſent,
The trophies of their ſtrength, a bloody monument.
Both fair, and both of royal blood they ſeem'd,
Whom kinſmen to the crown the heralds deem'd;
That day in equal arms they fought for fame;
Their ſwords, their ſhields, their ſurcoats were the ſame.
Cloſe by each other laid they preſs'd the ground,
Their manly boſoms pierc'd with many a grieſly wound;
Nor well alive, nor wholly dead they were,
But ſome faint ſigns of feeble life appear:
The wand'ring breath was on the wing to part,
Weak was the pulſe, and hardly heav'd the heart.
Theſe two were ſiſters ſons; and Arcite one,
Much fam'd in fields, with valiant Palamon.
From theſe their coſtly arms the ſpoilers rent,
And ſoftly both convey'd to Theſeus' tent;
Whom known of Creon's line, and cur'd with care,
He to his city ſent as pris'ners of the war,
Hopeleſs of ranſom, and condemn'd to lie
In durance, doom'd a ling'ring death to die.
This done, he march'd away with warlike ſound,
And to his Athens turn'd with laurels crown'd,
Where happy long he liv'd, much lov'd, and more renown'd.
But in a tow'r, and never to be loos'd,
The woful captive kinſmen are inclos'd.
Thus year by year they paſs, and day by day,
Till once ('twas on the morn of chearful May)
The young Emilia, fairer to be ſeen
Than the fair lilly on the flow'ry green,

More freſh than May herſelf in bloſſoms new
(For with the roſy colour ſtrove her hue)
Wak'd, as her cuſtom was, before the day,
To do th' obſervance due to ſprightly May:
For ſprightly May commands our youth to keep
The vigils of her night, and breaks their ſluggard ſleep:
Each gentle breaſt with kindly warmth ſhe moves;
Inſpires new flames, revives extinguiſh'd loves;
In this remembrance, Emily e'er day
Aroſe, and dreſs'd herſelf in rich array;
Freſh as the month, and as the morning fair:
Adown her ſhoulders fell her length of hair:
A ribband did the braided treſſes bind,
The reſt was looſe, and wanton'd in the wind:
Aurora had but newly chac'd the night,
And purpl'd o'er the ſky with bluſhing light,
When to the garden-walk ſhe took her way,
To ſport and trip along in cool of day,
And offer maiden vows in honour of the May.
At ev'ry turn, ſhe made a little ſtand,
And thruſt among the thorns her lilly hand,
To draw the roſe, and ev'ry roſe ſhe drew,
She ſhook the ſtalk, and bruſh'd away the dew:
Then party-colour'd flow'rs of white and red
She wove, to make a garland for her head:
This done, ſhe ſung and caroll'd out ſo clear,
That men and angels might rejoice to hear.
Ev'n wond'ring Philomel forgot to ſing;
And learn'd from her to welcome in the ſpring.
The tow'r, of which before was mention made,
Within whoſe keep the captive knights were laid,

Built of a large extent, and ſtrong withal,
Was one partition of the palace wall:
The garden was inclos'd within the ſquare
Where young Emilia took the morning air.
It happen'd Palamon, the pris'ner knight,
Reſtleſs for woe, aroſe before the light,
And with his jailor's leave deſir'd to breathe
An air more wholſome than the damps beneath.
This granted, to the tow'r he took his way,
Cheer'd with the promiſe of a glorious day:
Then caſt a languiſhing regard around,
And ſaw with hateful eyes the temples crown'd
With golden ſpires, and all the hoſtile ground.
He ſigh'd, and turn'd his eyes, becauſe he knew
'Twas but a larger jail he had in view:
Then look'd below, and from the caſtle's height
Beheld a nearer, and more pleaſing ſight:
The garden, which before he had not ſeen,
In ſpring's new livery clad of white and green,
Freſh flow'rs in wide parterres, and ſhady walks between.
This view'd, but not enjoy'd, with arms acroſs
He ſtood, reflecting on his country's loſs:
Himſelf an object of the public ſcorn,
And often wiſh'd he never had been born.
At laſt (for ſo his deſtiny requir'd)
With walking giddy, and with thinking tir'd,
He through a little window caſt his ſight,
Though thick of bars, that gave a ſcanty light:
But e'en that glimmering ſerv'd him to deſcry
Th' inevitable charms of Emily.

Scarce had he ſeen, but, ſeiz'd with ſudden ſmart,
Stung to the quick, he felt it at his heart;
Struck blind with overpowering light he ſtood,
Then ſtarted back amaz'd, and cry'd aloud.
Young Arcite heard; and up he ran with haſte,
To help his friend, and in his arms embrac'd;
And aſk'd him why he look'd ſo deadly wan,
And whence, and how his change of cheer began?
Or who had done th' offence? but if, ſaid he,
Your grief alone is hard captivity;
For love of heav'n, with patinece undergo
A cureleſs ill, ſince Fate will have it ſo:
So ſtood our horoſcope in chains to lie,
And Saturn in the dungeon of the ſky,
Or other baleful aſpect, rul'd our birth,
When all the friendly ſtars were under earth:
Whate'er betides, by deſtiny 'tis done;
And better bear like men, than vainly ſeek to ſhun.
Nor of my bonds, ſaid Palamon again,
Nor of unhappy planets I complain;
But when my mortal anguiſh caus'd my cry,
That moment I was hurt through either eye;
Pierc'd with a random-ſhaft, I faint away
And periſh with inſenſible decay:
A glance of ſome new goddeſs gave the wound,
Whom, like Acteon, unaware I found.
Look how ſhe walks along yon ſhady ſpace,
Not Juno moves with more majeſtic grace;
And all the Cyprian queen is in her face.
If thou art Venus, (for thy charms confeſs
That face was form'd in heav'n), nor art thou leſs;

Diſguis'd in habit, undiſguis'd in ſhape,
O help us captives from our chains to ſcape;
But if our doom be paſs'd in bonds to lie
For life, and in a loathſome dungeon die;
Then be thy wrath appeas'd with our diſgrace,
And ſhew compaſſion to the Theban race,
Oppreſs'd by tyrant pow'r! While yet he ſpoke,
Arcite on Emily had fix'd his look;
The fatal dart a ready paſſage found,
And deep within his heart infix'd the wound:
So that if Palamon were wounded ſore,
Arcite was hurt as much as he, or more:
Then from his inmoſt ſoul he ſigh'd, and ſaid,
The beauty I behold has ſtruck me dead:
Unknowingly ſhe ſtrikes; and kills by chance;
Poiſon is in her eyes, and death in every glance.
O, I muſt aſk; nor aſk alone, but move
Her mind to mercy, or muſt die for love.

Thus Arcite: And thus Palamon replies,
(Eager his tone, and ardent were his eyes,)
Speak'ſt thou in earneſt, or in jeſting vein?
Jeſting, ſaid Arcite, ſuits but ill with pain.
It ſuits far worſe, (ſaid Palamon again,
And bent his brows) with men who honour weigh,
Their faith to break, their friendſhip to betray;
But worſt with thee, of noble lineage born,
My kinſman, and in arms my brother ſworn.
Have we not plighted each our holy oath,
That one ſhould be the common good of both?
One ſoul ſhould both inſpire, and neither prove
His fellow's hindrance in purſuit of love?

To this before the gods we gave our hands,
And nothing but our death can break the bands.
This binds thee, then, to further my design:
As I am bound by vow to further thine:
Nor canst, nor dar'st thou, traitor, on the plain
Appeach my honour, or thy own maintain,
Since thou art of my council, and the friend
Whose faith I trust, and on whose care depend:
And would'st thou court my lady's love, which I
Much rather than release, would chuse to die?
But thou, false Arcite, never shalt obtain
Thy bad pretence; I told thee first my pain:
For first my love began e'er thine was born;
Thou, as my council, and my brother sworn,
Art bound t' assist my eldership of right,
Or justly to be deem'd a perjur'd knight.
Thus Palamon: But Arcite, with disdain,
In haughty language, thus reply'd again:
Forsworn thyself! the traitor's odious name
I first return, and then disprove thy claim.
If love be passion, and that passion nurs'd
With strong desires, I lov'd the lady first.
Canst thou pretend desire, whom zeal inflam'd
To worship, and a pow'r celestial nam'd?
Thine was devotion to the bless'd above,
I saw the woman, and desir'd her love;
First own'd my passion, and to thee commend
Th' important secret, as my chosen friend.
Suppose (which yet I grant not) thy desire
A moment elder than my rival fire;
Can chance of seeing first thy title prove?
And know'st thou not, no law is made for love?

Law is to things which to free choice relate;
Love is not in our choice, but in our fate:
Laws are but poſitive; love's power, we ſee,
Is Nature's ſanction, and her firſt decree.
Each day we break the bond of human laws
For love, and vindicate the common cauſe.
Laws for defence of civil rights are plac'd, [waſte:
Love throws the fences down, and makes a general
Maids, widows, wives, without diſtinction fall;
The ſweeping deluge, love, comes on, and covers all.
If then the laws of friendſhip I tranſgreſs,
I keep the greater, while I break the leſs;
And both are mad alike, ſince neither can poſſeſs.
Both hopeleſs to be ranſom'd, never more
To ſee the ſun, but as he paſſes o'er.

Like Eſop's hounds contending for the bone,
Each pleaded right, and would be lord alone:
The fruitleſs fight continu'd all the day;
A cur came by, and ſnatch'd the prize away.
As courtiers therefore juſtle for a grant, [want,
And when they break their friendſhip, plead their
So thou, if fortune will thy ſuit advance,
Love on; nor envy me my equal chance:
For I muſt love, and am reſolv'd to try
My fate, or failing in th' adventure die.

Great was their ſtrife, which hourly was renew'd,
Till each with mortal hate his rival view'd.
Now friends no more, nor walking hand in hand;
But when they met, they made a ſurly ſtand;
And glar'd like angry lions as they paſs'd,
And wiſh'd that ev'ry look might be their laſt.

It chanc'd at length, Perithous came, t' attend
This worthy Theſeus, his familiar friend.
Their love in early infancy began,
And roſe as childhood ripen'd into man.
Companions of the war; and lov'd ſo well,
That when one dy'd, as ancient ſtories tell,
His fellow, to redeem him, went to hell.
But to purſue my tale; to welcome home
His warlike brother is Perithous come.
Arcite of Thebes was known in arms long ſince,
And honour'd by this young Theſſalian prince.
Theſeus, to gratify his friend and gueſt,
Who made our Arcite's freedom his requeſt,
Reſtor'd to liberty the captive knight,
But on theſe hard conditions I recite;
That if hereafter Arcite ſhould be found
Within the compaſs of Athenian ground,
By day or night, or on whate'er pretence,
His head ſhould pay the forfeit of th' offence.
To this, Perithous for his friend, agreed,
And on his promiſe was the pris'ner freed.
Unpleas'd and penſive hence he takes his way,
At his own peril; for his life muſt pay.
Who now but Arcite mourns his bitter fate,
Finds his dear purchaſe, and repents too late?
What have I gain'd, he ſaid, in priſon pent,
If I but change my bonds for baniſhment?
And baniſh'd from her ſight, I ſuffer more
In freedom, than I felt in bonds before;
Forc'd from her preſence, and condemn'd to live;
Unwelcom'd freedom, and unthank'd reprieve.

Heav'n is not but where Emily abides,
And where ſhe's abſent, all is hell beſides.
Next to my day of birth was that accurſt,
Which bound my friendſhip to Perithous firſt;
Had I not known that prince, I ſtill had been
In bondage, and ſtill Emilia ſeen;
For though I never can her grace deſerve,
'Tis recompence enough to ſee and ſerve.
O Palamon, my kinſman and my friend,
How much more happy fates thy love attend!
Thine is th' adventure; thine the victory;
Well has thy fortune turn'd the dice for thee:
Thou on that angel's face may'ſt feed thy eyes,
In priſon, no; but bliſsful Paradiſe!
Thou daily ſeeſt that ſun of beauty ſhine,
And lov'ſt at leaſt in love's extremeſt line.
I mourn in abſence love's eternal night,
And who can tell but, ſince thou haſt her ſight,
And art a comely, young, and valiant knight,
Fortune (a various power) may ceaſe to frown,
And by ſome ways unknown thy wiſhes crown.
But I, the moſt forlorn of human kind,
Nor help can hope, nor remedy can find;
But doom'd to drag my loathſome life in care;
For my reward, muſt end it in deſpair.
Fire, water, air, and earth, and force of fates
That governs all, and heav'n that all creates,
Nor art, nor nature's hand can eaſe my grief,
Nothing but death, the wretch's laſt relief:
Then farewel youth, and all the joys that dwell
With youth and life, and life itſelf farewel.

But why, alas! do mortal men in vain
Of fortune, fate, or providence complain?
God gives us what he knows our wants require,
And better things than thoſe which we deſire:
Some pray for riches; riches they obtain;
But watch'd by robbers, for their wealth are ſlain:
Some pray from priſon to be freed; and come,
When guilty of their vows, to fall at home;
Murder'd by thoſe they truſted with their life;
A favour'd ſervant, or a boſom wife.
Such dear-bought bleſſings happen ev'ry day,
Becauſe we know not for what things to pray.
Like drunken ſots about the ſtreets we roam;
Well knows the ſot he has a certain home;
Yet knows not how to find th' uncertain place,
And blunders on, and ſtaggers ev'ry pace.
Thus all ſeek happineſs; but few can find,
For far the greater part of men are blind.
This is my caſe, who thought our utmoſt good
Was in one word of freedom underſtood:
The fatal bleſſing came; from priſon free,
I ſtarve abroad, and loſe the ſight of Emily.
Thus Arcite; but if Arcite thus deplore
His ſuff'rings, Palamon yet ſuffers more.
For when he knew his rival freed and gone,
He ſwells with wrath; he makes outrageous moan:
He frets, he fumes, he ſtares, he ſtamps the ground;
The hollow tow'r with clamours rings around:
With briny tears he bath'd his fetter'd feet,
And drop'd all o'er with agony of ſweat,
Alas! he cry'd, I wretch in priſon pine,
Too happy rival, while the fruit is thine:

Thou liv'ſt at large, thou draw'ſt thy native air,
Pleas'd with thy freedom, proud of my deſpair;
Thou may'ſt, ſince thou haſt youth and courage join'd,
A ſweet behaviour, and a ſolid mind,
Aſſemble ours, and all the Theban race,
To vindicate on Athens thy diſgrace.
And after (by ſome treaty made) poſſeſs
Fair Emily, the pledge of laſting peace.
So thine ſhall be the beauteous prize, while I
Muſt languiſh in deſpair, in priſon die.
Thus all th' advantage of the ſtrife is thine,
Thy portion double joys, and double ſorrows mine.
The rage of jealouſy then fir'd his ſoul,
And his face kindl'd like a burning coal:
Now cold Deſpair, ſucceeding in her ſtead,
To livid paleneſs turns the glowing red.
His blood ſcarce liquid, creeps within his veins,
Like water, which the freezing wind conſtrains.
Then thus he ſaid: Eternal deities,
Who rule the world with abſolute decrees,
And write whatever time ſhall bring to paſs
With pens of adamant, on plates of braſs!
What! is the race of human kind your care
Beyond what all his fellow-creatures are?
He with the reſt are liable to pain,
And like the ſheep, his brother-beaſt, is ſlain.
Cold, hunger, priſons, ills without a cure,
All theſe he muſt, and guiltleſs oft, endure:
Or does your juſtice, pow'r, or preſcience fail,
When the good ſuffer, and the bad prevail?
What worſe to wretched virtue could befal,
If Fate, or giddy Fortune govern'd all?

Nay, worſe than other beaſts is our eſtate;
Them, to purſue their pleaſures you create;
We, bound by harder laws, muſt curb our will,
And your commands, not our deſires fulfil:
Then when the creature is unjuſtly ſlain,
Yet after death at leaſt he feels no pain:
But man in life ſurcharg'd with woe before,
Not freed when dead, is doom'd to ſuffer more.
A ſerpent ſhoots his ſting at unaware;
An ambuſh'd thief forelays a traveller;
The man lies murder'd, while the thief and ſnake,
One gains the thickets, and one thrids the brake.
This let divines decide; but well I know,
Juſt, or unjuſt, I have my ſhare of woe:
Through Saturn ſeated in a luckleſs place,
And Juno's wrath, that perſecutes my race;
Or Mars and Venus in a quartil, move
My pangs of jealouſy for Arcite's love.
Let Palamon oppreſs'd in bondage mourn,
While to his exil'd rival we return.
By this the ſun declining from his height,
The day had ſhortned to prolong the night:
The lengthen'd night gave length of miſery
Both to the captive lover, and the free;
For Palamon in endleſs priſon mourns,
And Arcite forfeits life if he returns:
The baniſh'd never hopes his love to ſee,
Nor hopes the captive lord his liberty.
'Tis hard to ſay who ſuffers greater pains,
One ſees his love, but cannot break his chains:
One free, and all his motions uncontroul'd,
Beholds whate'er he wou'd but what he wou'd behold.

Judge as you pleaſe, for I will haſte to tell
What fortune to the baniſh'd knight befel.
When Arcite was to Thebes return'd again,
The loſs of her he lov'd renew'd his pain;
What could be worſe, than never more to ſee
His life, his ſoul, his charming Emily?
He rav'd with all the madneſs of deſpair,
He roar'd, he beat his breaſt, he tore his hair.
Dry ſorrow in his ſtupid eyes appears,
For wanting nouriſhment, he wanted tears:
His eye-balls in their hollow ſockets ſink,
Bereft of ſleep; he loaths his meat and drink.
He withers at his heart, and looks as wan
As the pale ſpectre of a murder'd man:
That pale turns yellow, and his face receives
The faded hue of ſapleſs boxen leaves:
In ſolitary groves he makes his moan,
Walks early out, and ever is alone.
Nor mix'd in mirth, in youthful pleaſures ſhares,
But ſighs when ſongs and inſtruments he hears:
His ſpirits are ſo low, his voice is drown'd,
He hears as from afar, or in a ſwound,
Like the deaf murmurs of a diſtant ſound:
Uncomb'd his locks, and ſqualid his attire,
Unlike the trim of love and gay deſire:
But full of muſeful mopings, which preſage
The loſs of reaſon, and conclude in rage.

This when he had endur'd a year and more,
Now wholly chang'd from what he was before,
It happen'd once, that ſlumbring as he lay,
He dream'd (his dream began at break of day)

That Hermes o'er his head in air appear'd,
And with ſoft words his drooping ſpirits cheer'd:
His hat, adorn'd with wings, diſclos'd the God,
And in his hand he bore the ſleep-compelling rod:
Such as he ſeem'd, when at his Sire's command
On Argus' head he laid the ſnaky wand;
Ariſe, he ſaid, to conq'ring Athens go,
There Fate appoints an end of all thy woe.
The fright awaken'd Arcite with a ſtart,
Againſt his boſom bounc'd his heaving heart;
But ſoon he ſaid, with ſcarce-recover'd breath,
And thither will I go, to meet my death,
Sure to be ſlain; but death is my deſire,
Since in Emilia's ſight I ſhall expire.
By chance he ſpy'd a mirrour while he ſpoke,
And gazing there beheld his alter'd look;
Wond'ring, he ſaw his features and his hue
So much were chang'd, that ſcarce himſelf he knew.
A ſudden thought then ſtarting in his mind,
Since I in Arcite cannot Arcite find,
The world may ſearch in vain with all their eyes,
But never penetrate through this diſguiſe.
Thanks to the change which grief and ſickneſs give;
In low eſtate I may ſecurely live,
And ſee unknown my miſtreſs day by day.
He ſaid; and cloath'd himſelf in coarſe array;
A lab'ring hind in ſhew: Then forth he went,
And to th' Athenian tow'rs his journey bent:
One ſquire attended in the ſame diſguiſe,
Made conſcious of his maſter's enterprize.
Arriv'd at Athens, ſoon he came to court,
Unknown, unqueſtion'd, in that thick reſort;

Proff'ring for hire his ſervice at the gate,
To drudge, draw water, and to run or wait.
So fair befel him, that for little gain
He ſerv'd at firſt Emilia's chamberlain;
And watchful all advantages to ſpy,
Was ſtill at hand, and in his maſter's eye;
And as his bones were big, and ſinews ſtrong,
Refus'd no toil that could to ſlaves belong;
But from deep wells with engines water drew,
And us'd his noble hands the wood to hew.
He paſs'd a year at leaſt attending thus
On Emily, and call'd Philoſtratus.
But never was there man of his degree
So much eſteem'd, ſo well belov'd as he.
So gentle of condition was he known,
That through the court his courteſy was blown:
All think him worthy of a greater place,
And recommend him to the royal grace;
That exercis'd within a higher ſphere,
His virtues more conſpicuous might appear.
Thus by the general voice was Arcite prais'd,
And by great Theſeus to high favour rais'd;
Among his menial ſervants firſt enroll'd,
And largely entertain'd with ſums of gold:
Beſides what ſecretly from Thebes was ſent,
Of his own income, and his annual rent.
This well employ'd, he purchas'd friends and fame,
But cautiouſly conceal'd from whence it came.
Thus for three years he liv'd with large increaſe,
In arms of honour, and eſteem in peace;
To Theſeus' perſon he was ever near,
And Theſeus for his virtues held him dear.

The End of the Firſt Book.

PALAMON AND ARCITE.

OR,

THE KNIGHT's TALE.

BOOK II.

WHILE Arcite lives in bliſs, the ſtory turns
Where hopeleſs Palamon in priſon mourns.
For ſix long years immur'd, the captive knight
Had dragg'd his chains, and ſcarcely ſeen the light:
Loſt liberty, and love at once he bore;
His priſon pain'd him much, his paſſion more:
Nor dares he hope his fetters to remove,
Nor ever wiſhes to be free from love.

But when the ſixth revolving year was run,
And May within the Twins receiv'd the Sun,
Were it by chance, or forceful deſtiny,
Which forms in cauſes firſt whate'er ſhall be,
Aſſiſted by a friend one moonleſs night,
This Palamon from priſon took his flight:
A pleaſant beverage he prepar'd before
Of wine and honey mix'd, with added ſtore
Of opium; to his keeper this he brought,
Who ſwallow'd unaware the ſleepy draught,

And ſnor'd ſecure till morn, his ſenſes bound
In ſlumber, and in long oblivion drown'd.
Short was the night, and careful Palamon
Sought the next covert e'er the riſing Sun.
A thick ſpread foreſt near the city lay,
To this with lengthen'd ſtrides he took his way,
(For far he could not fly, and fear'd the day:)
Safe from purſuit, he meant to ſhun the light,
Till the brown ſhadows of the friendly night
To Thebes might favour his intended flight.
When to his country come, his next deſign
Was all the Theban race in arms to join,
And war on Theſeus, till he loſt his life,
Or won the beauteous Emily to wife.
Thus while his thoughts the lingring day beguile,
To gentle Arcite let us turn our ſtyle;
Who little dream'd how nigh he was to care,
Till treacherous fortune caught him in the ſnare.
The morning-lark, the meſſenger of day,
Saluted in her ſong the morning gray;
And ſoon the ſun aroſe with beams ſo bright,
That all th' horizon laugh'd to ſee the joyous ſight;
He with his tepid rays the roſe renews,
And licks the dropping leaves, and dries the dews;
When Arcite left his bed, reſolv'd to pay
Obſervance to the month of merry May:
Forth on his fiery ſteed betimes he rode,
That ſcarcely prints the turf on which he trode:
At eaſe he ſeem'd, and pranſing o'er the plains,
Turn'd only to the grove his horſes reins,
The grove I nam'd before; and lighting there,
A woodbind garland ſought to crown his hair;

Then turn'd his face againſt the riſing day,
And rais'd his voice to welcome in the May.
For thee, ſweet month, the groves green liv'ries wear:
If not the firſt, the faireſt of the year:
For thee the Graces lead the dancing hours,
And Nature's ready pencil paints the flow'rs:
When thy ſhort reign is paſt, the fev'riſh ſun
The ſultry tropic fears, and moves more ſlowly on.
So may thy tender bloſſoms fear no blite,
Nor goats with venom'd teeth thy tendrils bite,
As thou ſhalt guide my wand'ring feet to find
The fragrant greens I ſeek, my brows to bind.
His vows addreſs'd, within the grove he ſtray'd,
Till Fate, or Fortune, near the place convey'd
His ſteps where ſecret Palamon was laid.
Full little thought of him the gentle knight,
Who flying death had there conceal'd his flight,
In brakes and brambles hid, and ſhunning mortal ſight.
And leſs he knew him for his hated foe,
But fear'd him as a man he did not know.
But as it has been ſaid of ancient years,
That fields are full of eyes, and woods have ears;
For this the wiſe are ever on their guard,
For, unforeſeen, they ſay, is unprepar'd.
Uncautious Arcite thought himſelf alone,
And leſs than all ſuſpected Palamon,
Who liſt'ning heard him, while he ſearch'd the grove,
And loudly ſung his roundelay of love.
But on the ſudden ſtopp'd, and ſilent ſtood,
(As lovers often muſe, and change their mood;)

Now high as heav'n, and then as low as hell;
Now up, now down, as buckets in a well:
For Venus, like her day, will change her cheer,
And ſeldom ſhall we ſee a Friday clear.
Thus Arcite having ſung, with alter'd hue
Sunk on the ground, and from his boſom drew
A deſp'rate ſigh, accuſing Heav'n and Fate,
And angry Juno's unrelenting hate.
Curs'd be the day when firſt I did appear;
Let it be blotted from the kalendar,
Leſt it pollute the month, and poiſon all the year.
Still will the jealous queen purſue our race?
Cadmus is dead, the Theban city was:
Yet ceaſes not her hate: For all who come
From Cadmus are involv'd in Cadmus' doom.
I ſuffer for my blood: Unjuſt decree!
That puniſhes another's crime on me.
In mean eſtate I ſerve my mortal foe,
The man who caus'd my country's overthrow.
This is not all; for Juno to my ſhame,
Has forc'd me to forſake my former name;
Arcite I was, Philoſtratus I am.
That ſide of heav'n is all my enemy:
Mars ruin'd Thebes; his mother ruin'd me.
Of all the royal race remains but one,
Beſides myſelf, th' unhappy Palamon,
Whom Theſeus holds in bonds, and will not free;
Without a crime, except his kin to me.
Yet theſe, and all the reſt I could endure;
But love's a malady without a cure:
Fierce love has pierc'd me with his fiery dart,
He fries within, and hiſſes at my heart.

Your eyes, fair Emily, my fate purſue;
I ſuffer for the reſt; I die for you.
Of ſuch a goddeſs no time leaves record,
Who burn'd the temple where ſhe was ador'd:
And let it burn, I never will complain,
Pleas'd with my ſuff'rings, if you knew my pain.
At this a ſickly qualm his heart aſſail'd,
His ears ring inward, and his ſenſes fail'd.
No word miſs'd Palamon of all he ſpoke,
But ſoon to deadly pale he chang'd his look:
He trembl'd ev'ry limb, and felt a ſmart,
As if cold ſteel had glided through his heart;
Nor longer ſtaid, but ſtarting from his place,
Diſcover'd ſtood, and ſhew'd his hoſtile face:
Falſe traitor Arcite, traitor to thy blood,
Bound by thy ſacred oath to ſeek my good,
Now art thou found forſworn, for Emily;
And dar'ſt attempt her love, for whom I die.
So haſt thou cheated Theſeus with a wile,
Againſt thy vow returning, to beguile
Under a borrowed name; as falſe to me,
So falſe thou art to him who ſet thee free.
But reſt aſſur'd, that either thou ſhalt die,
Or elſe renounce thy claim on Emily;
For though unarm'd I am, (and freed by chance)
Am here without my ſword, or pointed lance;
Hope not, baſe man, unqueſtion'd hence to go,
For I am Palamon, thy mortal foe.
Arcite, who heard his tale, and knew the man,
His ſword unſheath'd, and fiercely thus began:
Now by the gods, who govern heav'n above,
Wert thou not weak with hunger, mad with love,

That word had been thy laſt, or in this grove
This hand ſhould force thee to renounce thy love.
The ſurety which I gave thee, I defy;
Fool! not to know that love endures no tie,
And Jove but laughs at lovers perjury.
Know I will ſerve the fair in thy deſpite;
But ſince thou art my kinſman, and a knight,
Here, have my faith, to-morrow in this grove
Our arms ſhall plead the titles of our love:
And heav'n ſo help my right, as I alone [known;
Will come, and keep the cauſe and quarrel both un-
With arms of proof both for myſelf and thee;
Chuſe thou the beſt, and leave the worſt to me.
And, that at better eaſe thou may'ſt abide,
Bedding and clothes I will this night provide,
And needful ſuſtenance, that thou mayſt be
A conqueſt better won, and worthy me.
His promiſe Palamon accepts; but pray'd,
To keep it better than the firſt he made.
Thus fair they parted till the morrow's dawn,
For each had laid his plighted faith to pawn.
Oh Love! thou ſternly do'ſt thy pow'r maintain,
And wilt not bear a rival in thy reign,
Tyrants and thou all fellowſhip diſdain.
This was in Arcite prov'd, and Palamon,
Both in deſpair, yet each would love alone.
Arcite return'd, and, as in honour ty'd,
His foe with bedding and with food ſupply'd;
Then, e'er the day, two ſuits of armour ſought,
Which borne before him on his ſteed he brought:
Both were of ſhining ſteel, and wrought ſo pure,
As might the ſtrokes of two ſuch arms endure.

Now, at the time, and in th' appointed place,
The challenger, and challeng'd, face to face,
Approach; each other from afar they knew,
And from afar their hatred chang'd their hue.
So ſtands the Thracian herdſman with his ſpear,
Full in the gap, and hopes the hunted bear,
And hears him ruſtling in the wood, and ſees
His courſe at diſtance by the bending trees;
And thinks here comes my mortal enemy,
And either he muſt fall in fight, or I:
This while he thinks, he lifts aloft his dart;
A gen'rous chilneſs ſeizes ev'ry part;
The veins pour back the blood, and fortify the heart.
Thus pale they meet; their eyes with fury burn;
None greets; for none the greeting will return:
But in dumb ſurlineſs, each arm'd with care
His foe profeſs'd, as brother of the war.
Then both, no moment loſt, at once advance
Againſt each other, arm'd with ſword and lance;
They laſh, they foin, they paſs, they ſtrive to bore
Their corſlets, and the thinneſt parts explore.
Thus two long hours in equal arms they ſtood,
And wounded, wound; till both were bath'd in blood;
And not a foot of ground had either got,
As if the world depended on the ſpot.
Fell Arcite like an angry tyger far'd,
And like a lion Palamon appear'd:
Or as two boars whom love to battle draws,
With riſing briſtles, and with froathy jaws,
Their adverſe breaſts with tuſks oblique they wound;
With grunts and groans the foreſt rings around.

So fought the knights, and fighting muſt abide,
Till Fate an umpire ſends their diff'rence to decide.
The pow'r that miniſters to God's decrees,
And executes on earth what Heaven foreſees,
Call'd providence, or chance, or fatal ſway,
Comes with reſiſtleſs force, and finds or makes her way.
Nor kings, nor nations, nor united pow'r
One moment can retard th' appointed hour.
And ſome one day, ſome wondrous chance appears,
Which happen'd not in centuries of years:
For ſure, whate'er we mortals hate or love,
Or hope, or fear, depends on pow'rs above;
They move our appetites to good or ill,
And by foreſight neceſſitate the will.
In Theſeus this appears; whoſe youthful joy
Was beaſts of chaſe in foreſts to deſtroy;
This gentle knight, inſpir'd by jolly May,
Forſook his eaſy couch at early day,
And to the wood and wilds purſu'd his way.
Beſide him rode Hippolita the queen,
And Emily attir'd in lively green:
With horns, and hounds, and all the tuneful cry,
To hunt a royal hart within the covert nigh:
And as he follow'd Mars before, ſo now
He ſerves the goddeſs of the ſilver bow.
The way that Theſeus took was to the wood
Where the two knights in cruel battle ſtood:
The lawn on which they fought, th' appointed place
In which th' uncoupl'd hounds began the chace.
Thither forth-right he rode to rouſe the prey,
That ſhaded by the fern in harbour lay;

And thence diſlodg'd, was wont to leave the wood,
For open fields, and croſs the chryſtal flood.
Approach'd, and looking underneath the ſun,
He ſaw the proud Arcite, and fierce Palamon,
In mortal battle doubling blow on blow,
Like lightn'ning flam'd their faulchions to and fro,
And ſhot a dreadful gleam; ſo ſtrong they ſtrook,
There ſeem'd leſs force requir'd to fell an oak:
He gaz'd with wonder on their equal might,
Look'd eager on, but knew not either knight;
Reſolv'd to learn, he ſpurr'd his fiery ſteed
With goring rowels, to provoke his ſpeed.
The minute ended that began the race,
So ſoon he was betwixt 'em on the place;
And with his ſword unſheath'd, on pain of life,
Commands both combatants to ceaſe their ſtrife
Then with imperious tone purſues his threat;
What are you? why in arms together met?
How dares your pride preſume againſt my laws,
As in a liſted field to fight your cauſe?
Unaſk'd the royal grant; no marſhal by,
As knightly rites require; nor judge to try?
Then Palmon, with ſcarce recover'd breath,
Thus haſty ſpoke: We both deſerve the death,
And both wou'd die; for look the world around,
A pair ſo wretched is not to be found.
Our life's a load; encumber'd with the charge,
We long to ſet th' impriſon'd ſoul at large.
Now as thou art a ſovereign judge, decree
The rightful doom of death to him and me,
Let neither find thy grace; for grace is cruelty.

Me firſt, O kill me firſt; and cure my woe:
Then ſheath the ſword of juſtice in my foe:
Or kill him firſt; for when his name is heard,
He foremoſt will receive his due reward.
Arcite of Thebes is he; thy mortal foe,
On whom thy grace did liberty beſtow;
But firſt contracted, that if ever found,
By day or night, upon th' Athenian ground,
His head ſhould pay the forfeit: See return'd
The perjur'd knight, his oath and honour ſcorn'd.
For this is he, who with a borrow'd name
And profer'd ſervice, to thy palace came,
Now call'd Philoſtratus: Retain'd by thee,
A traitor truſted, and in high degree,
Aſpiring to the bed of beauteous Emily.
My part remains: From Thebes my birth I own,
And call myſelf th' unhappy Palamon.
Think me not like that man; ſince no diſgrace
Can force me to renounce the honour of my race.
Know me for what I am: I broke thy chain,
Nor promis'd I thy pris'ner to remain:
The love of liberty with life is giv'n,
And life itſelf th' inferior gift of Heav'n.
Thus without crime I fled; but farther know,
I with this Arcite am thy mortal foe.
Then give me death, ſince I thy life purſue;
For ſafeguard of thyſelf, death is my due.
More wouldſt thou know? I love bright Emily,
And for her ſake, and in her ſight will die.
But kill my rival too, for he no leſs
Deſerves, and I thy righteous doom will bleſs,
Aſſur'd that what I loſe, he never ſhall poſſeſs.

To this reply'd the ſtern Athenian prince,
And ſow'rly ſmil'd, In owning your offence
You judge yourſelf; and I but keep record
In place of law, while you pronounce the word.
Take your deſert, the death you have decree'd;
I ſeal your doom, and ratify the deed.
By Mars, the patron of my arms, you die.
He ſaid; dumb ſorrow ſeiz'd the ſtanders by.
The queen above the reſt, by nature good,
(The pattern form'd of perfect womanhood)
For tender pity wept: When ſhe began,
Through the bright quire th' infectious virtue ran.
All drop'd their tears, e'en the contended maid;
And thus among themſelves they ſoftly ſaid:
What eyes can ſuffer this unworthy ſight!
Two youths of royal blood, renown'd in fight,
The maſterſhip of heav'n in face and mind,
And lovers, far beyond their faithleſs kind;
See their wide ſtreaming wounds; they neither came
From pride of empire, nor deſire of fame:
Kings fight for kingdoms, madmen for applauſe;
But love for love alone; that crowns the lover's cauſe.
This thought, which ever bribes the beauteous kind,
Such pity wrought in ev'ry lady's mind,
They left their ſteeds, and proſtrate on the place,
From the fierce king, implor'd th' offenders grace.
He paus'd a while, ſtood ſilent in his mood,
(For yet, his rage was boiling in his blood;)
But ſoon his tender mind th' impreſſion felt,
(As ſofteſt metals are not ſlow to melt,
And pity ſooneſt runs in gentle minds:)
Then reaſons with himſelf; and firſt he finds,

His paſſion caſt a miſt before his ſenſe,
And either made, or magnifi'd th' offence.
Offence! of what? to whom? who judg'd the cauſe?
The pris'ner freed himſelf by nature's laws;
Born free, he fought his right: The man he freed
Was perjur'd, but his love excus'd the deed.
Thus pond'ring, he look'd under with his eyes,
And ſaw the womens tears, and heard their cries;
Which mov'd compaſſion more: He ſhook his head,
And ſoftly ſighing to himſelf, he ſaid, [draw
Curſe on th' unpard'ning prince, whom tears can
To no remorſe; who rules by lions law;
And deaf to pray'rs, by no ſubmiſſion bow'd,
Rends all alike, the penitent, and proud.
At this, with look ſerene, he rais'd his head,
Reaſon reſum'd her place, and paſſion fled.
Then thus aloud he ſpoke: The pow'r of love,
In earth, and ſeas, and air, and heav'n above,
Rules, unreſiſted, with an awful nod;
By daily miracles declar'd a god;
He blinds the wiſe, gives eye-ſight to the blind;
And moulds and ſtamps anew the lover's mind.
Behold that Arcite, and this Palamon,
Freed from my fetters, and in ſafety gone;
What hinder'd either in their native ſoil
At eaſe to reap the harveſt of their toil?
But love, their lord, did otherwiſe ordain,
And brought 'em in their own deſpite again,
To ſuffer death deſerv'd; for well they know,
'Tis in my pow'r, and I their deadly foe.
The proverb holds, that to be wiſe and love,
Is hardly granted to the gods above.

See how the madmen bleed; behold the gains
With which their maſter, Love, rewards their pains:
For ſev'n long years, on duty ev'ry day,
Lo their obedience, and their monarchs pay!
Yet, as in duty bound, they ſerve him on,
And aſk the fools, they think it wiſely done:
Nor eaſe, nor wealth, nor life itſelf regard,
For 'tis their maxim, love is love's reward.
This is not all; the air, for whom they ſtrove,
Nor knew before, nor could ſuſpect their love;
Nor thought, when ſhe beheld the fight from far,
Her beauty was th' occaſion of th' war.
But ſure a gen'ral doom on man is paſt,
And all are fools and lovers, firſt or laſt:
This both by others and myſelf I know;
For I have ſerv'd their ſovereign long ago;
Oft have been caught within the winding train
Of female ſnares, and felt the lovers pain,
And learn'd how far the god can human hearts
conſtrain.
To this remembrance, and the pray'rs of thoſe
Who for th' offending warriors interpoſe,
I give their forfeit lives; on this accord,
To do me homage as their ſov'reign Lord;
And as my vaſſals, to their utmoſt might,
Aſſiſt my perſon, and aſſert my right.
This, freely ſworn, the knights their grace obtain'd;
Then thus the king his ſecret thoughts explain'd:
If wealth, or honour, or á royal race,
Or each, or all, may win a lady's grace,
Then either of you knights may well deſerve
A princeſs born; and ſuch is ſhe you ſerve:

For Emily is ſiſter to the crown,
And but too well to both her beauty known:
But ſhou'd you combat till you both were dead,
Two lovers cannot ſhare a ſingle bed:
As therefore both are equal in degree,
The lot of both be left to deſtiny.
Now hear th' award, and happy may it prove
To her, and him who beſt deſerves her love.
Depart from hence in peace, and free as air,
Search the wide world, and where you pleaſe repair:
But on the day when this returning ſun
'To the ſame point through ev'ry ſign has run,
Then each of you his hundred knights ſhall bring,
In royal liſts, to fight before the king;
And then, the knight, whom fate or happy chance
Shall with his friends to victory advance,
And grace his arms ſo far in equal fight,
From out the bars to force his oppoſite,
Or kill, or make him recreant on the plain,
The prize of valour and of love ſhall gain;
The vanquiſh'd party ſhall their claim releaſe,
And the long jars conclude in laſting peace.
The charge be mine t' adorn the choſen ground,
The theatre of war, for champions ſo renown'd;
And take the patrons place of either knight,
With eyes impartial to behold the fight;
And Heav'n of me ſo judge, as I ſhall judge aright.
If both are ſatisfy'd with this accord,
Swear by the laws of knighthood on my ſword.
Who now but Palamon exults with joy?
And raviſh'd Arcite ſeems to touch the ſky.

The whole aſſembl'd troop was pleas'd as well,
Extoll'd th' award, and on their knees they fell,
To bleſs the gracious king. The knights with leave
Departing from the place, his laſt commands receive;
On Emily with equal ardour look,
And from her eyes their inſpiration took.
From thence to Thebes' old walls purſue their way,
Each to provide his champions for the day.
It might be deem'd on our hiſtorian's part,
Or too much negligence, or want of art,
If he forgot the vaſt magnificence
Of royal Theſeus, and his large expence.
He firſt enclos'd for liſts a level ground,
The whole circumference a mile around.
The form was circular; and all without
A trench was ſunk, to moat the place about.
Within an amphitheatre appear'd,
Rais'd in degrees; to ſixty paces rear'd:
That when a man was plac'd in one degree,
Height was allow'd for him above to ſee.
Eaſtward was built a gate of marble white;
The like adorn'd the weſtern oppoſite.
A nobler object than this fabrick was,
Rome never ſaw, nor of ſo vaſt a ſpace;
For, rich with ſpoils of many a conquer'd land,
All arts and artiſts Theſeus could command;
Who ſold for hire, or wrought for better fame;
The maſter-painters, and the carvers came.
So roſe within the compaſs of the year
An age's work, a glorious theatre.
Then o'er its eaſtern gate was rais'd above,
A temple, ſacred to the queen of love;

An altar ſtood below; on either hand
A prieſt with roſes crown'd, who held a myrtle wand.
The dome of Mars was on the gate oppos'd,
And on the north a turret was enclos'd,
Within the wall, of alabaſter white,
And crimſon coral, for the queen of night,
Who takes in ſylvan ſports her chaſte delight.
Within theſe oratories might you ſee
Rich carvings, portraitures, and imagery:
Where ev'ry figure to the life expreſs'd
The godhead's pow'r to whom it was addreſs'd.
In Venus' temple, on the ſides were ſeen
The broken ſlumbers of inamour'd men:
Pray'rs that ev'n ſpoke, and pity ſeem'd to call,
And iſſuing ſighs that ſmoak'd along the wall.
Complaints, and hot deſires, the lover's hell,
And ſcalding tears, that wore a channel where they fell:
And all around were nuptial bonds, the ties
Of love's aſſurance, and a train of lies,
That, made in luſt, conclude in perjuries.
Beauty, and youth, and wealth, and luxury,
And ſprightly hope, and ſhort-enduring joy;
And ſorceries, to raiſe th' infernal pow'rs,
And ſigils fram'd in planetary hours:
Expence, and after-thought, and idle care,
And doubts of motely hue, and dark deſpair:
Suſpicions, and fantaſtical ſurmiſe,
And jealouſy ſuffus'd with jaundice in her eyes;
Diſcolouring all ſhe view'd, in tawny dreſs'd;
Down-look'd, and with a cuckow on her fiſt.
Oppos'd to her, on t' other ſide, advance
The coaſtly feaſt, the carol, and the dance,

Minſtrels, and muſic, poetry, and play,
And balls by night, and tournaments by day.
All theſe were painted on the wall, and more;
With acts and monuments of times before:
And others added by prophetic doom,
And lovers yet unborn, and loves to come:
For there, th' Idalian mount, and Citheron,
The court of Venus, was in colours drawn.
Before the palace-gate, in careleſs dreſs,
And looſe array, ſat portreſs Idleneſs:
There, by the fount, Narciſſus pin'd alone;
There Samſon was, with wiſer Solomon,
And all the mighty names by love undone:
Medea's charms were there, Circean feaſts,
With bowls that turn'd enamour'd youth to beaſts.
Here might be ſeen, that beauty, wealth, and wit,
And proweſs, to the pow'r of love ſubmit:
The ſpreading ſnare for all mankind is laid;
And lovers all betray, and are betray'd.
The goddeſs ſelf, ſome noble hand had wrought;
Smiling ſhe ſeem'd, and full of pleaſing thought;
From ocean as ſhe firſt began to riſe,
And ſmooth'd the ruffl'd ſees, and clear'd the ſkies;
She trode the brine all bare below the breaſt,
And the green waves but ill conceal'd the reſt;
A lute ſhe held, and on her head was ſeen
A wreath of roſes red, and myrtles green;
Her turtles fann'd the buxom air above;
And, by his mother, ſtood an infant Love:
With wings unfledg'd; his eyes were banded o'er;
His hands a bow, his back a quiver bore,
Supply'd with arrows bright and keen a deadly ſtore.

But in the dome of mighty Mars the red,
With diff'rent figures all the ſides were ſpread.
This temple, leſs in form, with equal grace,
Was imitative of the firſt in Thrace;
For that cold region was the lov'd abode,
And ſov'reign manſion of the warrior god.
The landſcape was a foreſt wide and bare;
Where neither beaſt nor human kind repair;
The fowl, that ſcent afar, the borders fly,
And ſhun the bitter blaſt, and wheel about the ſky.
A cake of ſcurf lies baking on the ground,
And prickly ſtubs, inſtead of trees, are found;
Or woods with knots, and knares, deform'd and old,
Headleſs the moſt, and hideous to behold.
A rattling tempeſt through the branches went,
That ſtrip'd them bare, and one ſole way they bent.
Heav'n froze above, ſevere, the clouds congeal,
And through the cryſtal vault appear'd the ſtanding hail.
Such was the face without, a mountain ſtood
Threat'ning from high, and overlook'd the wood.
Beneath the low'ring brow, and on a bent,
The temple ſtood of Mars armipotent;
The frame of burniſh'd ſteel, that caſt a glare
From far, and ſeem'd to thaw the freezing air.
A ſtreight, long entry, to the temple led,
Blind with high walls; and horror over head;
Thence iſſu'd ſuch a blaſt, and hollow roar,
As threaten'd from the hinge to heave the door.
In through that door, a northern light there ſhone:
'Twas all it had, for windows there were none.

The gate was adamant, eternal frame!
Which, hew'd by Mars himſelf, from Indian quarries [came,
The labour of a God; and all along
Tough iron plates were clench'd to make it ſtrong.
A tun about, was ev'ry pillar there;
A poliſh'd mirrour ſhone not half ſo clear.
There ſaw I how the ſecret felon wrought,
And treaſon lab'ring in the traitor's thought;
And midwife Time the ripen'd plot to murder brought.
There, the red Anger dar'd the pallid Fear;
Next ſtood Hypocriſy, with holy lear,
Soft, ſmiling, and demurely looking down,
But hid the dagger underneath the gown:
Th' aſſaſſinating wife, the houſhold fiend;
And far the blackeſt there, the traitor-friend.
On t' other ſide there ſtood Deſtruction bare;
Unpuniſh'd Rapine, and a waſte of war.
Conteſt, with ſharpen'd knives in cloyſters drawn,
And all with blood beſpread the holy lawn.
Loud menaces were heard, and foul Diſgrace,
And bawling Infamy, in language baſe; [place.
Till Senſe was loſt in ſound, and Silence fled the
The ſlayer of himſelf yet ſaw I there,
The gore congeal'd was clotter'd in his hair:
With eyes half clos'd, and gaping mouth he lay,
And grim, as when he breath'd his ſullen ſoul away.
In midſt of all the dome, Misfortune ſat,
And gloomy Diſcontent, and fell Debate;
And Madneſs laughing in his ireful mood;
And arm'd Complaint, and Theft, and cries of blood.

There was the murder'd corps, in covert laid,
And violent death in thouſand ſhapes diſplay'd:
The city to the ſoldier's rage reſign'd:
Succeſsleſs wars, and poverty behind:
Ships burnt in fight, or forc'd on rocky ſhores,
And the raſh hunter ſtrangled by the boars;
The new-born babe by nurſes overlaid;
And the cook caught within the raging fire he made.
All ills of Mars his nature, flame and ſteel;
The gaſping charioteer, beneath the wheel
Of his own carr; the ruin'd houſe that falls
And intercepts her lord betwixt the walls:
The whole diviſion that to Mars pertains,
All trades of death that deal in ſteel for gains,
Were there; the butcher, armourer, and ſmith,
Who forges ſharpen'd faulchions, or the ſcythe.
The ſcarlet Conqueſt on a tow'r was plac'd,
With ſhouts, and ſoldiers acclamations grac'd:
A pointed ſword hung threat'ning o'er his head,
Suſtain'd but by a ſlender twine of thread.
There ſaw I Mars his Ides, the Capitol,
The Seer in vain foretelling Caeſar's fall;
The laſt Triumvirs, and the wars they move,
And Antony, who loſt the world for love.
Theſe, and a thouſand more, the fane adorn;
Their fates were painted e'er the men were born.
All copied from the heav'ns, and ruling force
Of the red ſtar, in his revolving courſe.
The form of Mars high on a chariot ſtood,
All ſheath'd in arms, and gruffly look'd the god;

Two geomantic figures were diſplay'd
Above his head, a * warriour and a maid,
One when direct, and one when retrograde.
Tir'd with deformities of death, I haſte
To the third temple of Diana chaſte.
A ſylvan ſcene with various greens was drawn,
Shades on the ſides, and on the midſt a lawn;
The ſilver Cynthia, with her nymphs around,
Purſu'd the flying deer; the woods with horns reſound:
Caliſto there ſtood manifeſt of ſhame,
And turn'd a bear, the northern ſtar became:
Her ſon was next, and by peculiar grace
In the cold circle held the ſecond place;
The ſtag Acteon in the ſtream had ſpy'd
The naked huntreſs, and, for ſeeing, dy'd;
His hounds, unknowing of his change, purſue
The chace, and their miſtaken maſter ſlew.
Peneian Daphne too was there to ſee,
Apollo's love before, and now his tree;
Th' adjoining fane th' aſſembl'd Greeks expreſs'd,
And hunting of the Calydonian beaſt,
Oenides valour, and his envy'd prize;
The fatal pow'r of Atalanta's eyes;
Diana's vengeance on the victor ſhown,
The murdreſs mother, and conſuming ſon.
The Volſcian Queen extended on the plain;
The treaſon puniſh'd, and the traitor ſlain.
The reſt were various huntings, well deſign'd,
And ſavage beaſts deſtroy'd, of ev'ry kind.

* *Rubeus* et *Puella*.

The graceful goddeſs was array'd in green;
About her feet were little beagles ſeen, [queen.
That watch'd with upward eyes the motions of their
Her legs were buſkin'd, and the left before,
In act to ſhoot, a ſilver bow ſhe bore,
And at her back a painted quiver wore.
She trode a wexing moon, that ſoon wou'd wane,
And drinking borrow'd light, be fill'd again;
With down-caſt eyes, as ſeeming to ſurvey
The dark dominions, her alternate ſway.
Before her ſtood a woman in her throws,
And call'd Lucina's aid, her burden to diſcloſe.
All theſe the painter drew with ſuch command,
That nature ſnatch'd the pencil from his hand,
Aſham'd and angry that his art could feign
And mend the tortures of a mother's pain.
Theſeus beheld the fanes of ev'ry god,
And thought his mighty coſt was well beſtow'd;
So princes now their poets ſhould regard;
But few can write, and fewer can reward.
The theatre thus rais'd, the liſts enclos'd,
And all with vaſt magnificence diſpos'd,
We leave the monarch pleas'd, and haſte to bring
The knights to combat; and their arms to ſing.

The End of the Second Book.

PALAMON

AND

ARCITE.

OR,

THE KNIGHT's TALE.

BOOK III.

THE day approach'd when Fortune ſhou'd decide
Th' important enterprize, and give the bride;
For now, the rivals round the world had ſought,
And each his number, well appointed, brought.
The nations far and near, contend in choice,
And ſend the flow'r of war by public voice;
That after, or before, were never known
Such chiefs; as each an army ſeem'd alone;
Beſide the champions, all of high degree,
Who knighthood lov'd, and deeds of chivalry,
Throng'd to the liſts, and envy'd to behold
The names of others, not their own inroll'd.
Nor ſeems it ſtrange; for ev'ry noble knight,
Who loves the fair, and is endu'd with might,
In ſuch a quarrel wou'd be proud to fight.
There breathes not ſcarce a man on Britiſh ground,
(An iſle for love, and arms of old renown'd),

But would have ſold his life to purchaſe fame,
To Palamon or Arcite ſent his name:
And had the land ſelected of the beſt,
Half had come hence, and let the world provide the reſt.
A hundred knights with Palamon there came,
Approv'd in fight, and men of mighty name;
Their arms were ſev'ral, as their nations were,
But furniſh'd all alike with ſword and ſpear.
Some wore coat-armour, imitating ſcale;
And next their ſkins were ſtubborn ſhirts of mail.
Some wore a breaſt-plate and a light juppon,
Their horſes cloath'd with rich capariſon:
Some for defence would leathern bucklers uſe,
Of folded hides; and others ſhields of pruce.
One hung a poleax at his ſaddle-bow,
And one a heavy mace, to ſtun the foe:
One for his legs and knees provided well,
With jambeaux arm'd, and double plates of ſteel:
This on his helmet wore a ladies glove,
And that a ſleeve embroider'd by his love.
With Palamon, above the reſt in place
Lycurgus came, the ſurly king of Thrace;
Black was his beard, and manly was his face.
The balls of his broad eyes roll'd in his head,
And glar'd betwixt a yellow and a red:
He look'd a lion with a gloomy ſtare,
And o'er his eye-brows hung his matted hair:
Big bon'd, and large of limbs, with ſinews ſtrong,
Broad ſhoulder'd, and his arms were round and long.
Four milk white bulls (the Thracian uſe of old)
Were yok'd to draw his car of burniſh'd gold:

Upright he ſtood, and bore aloft his ſhield,
Conſpicuous from afar, and over-look'd the field:
His ſurcoat was a bear-ſkin on his back;
His hair hung long behind, and gloſſy raven-black:
His ample forehead bore a coronet,
With ſparkling diamonds, and with rubies ſet:
Ten brace, and more, of grey-hounds, ſnowy-fair,
And tall as ſtags, ran looſe, and cours'd around his chair,
A match for pards in flight, in grappling, for the bear;
With golden muzzles all their mouths were bound,
And collars of the ſame their necks ſurround.
Thus through the fields Lycurgus took his way;
His hundred knights attend in pomp and proud array.
To match this monarch, with ſtrong Arcite came
Emetrius king of Inde, a mighty name,
On a bay courſer, goodly to behold,
The trappings of his horſe emboſs'd with barb'rous gold.
Not Mars beſtrode a ſteed with greater grace;
His ſurcoat o'er his arms was cloth of Thrace,
Adorn'd with pearls, all orient, round, and great;
His ſaddle was of gold, with emeralds ſet.
His ſhoulders large a mantle did attire,
With rubies thick, and ſparkling as the fire:
His amber-colour'd locks in ringlets run,
With graceful negligence, and ſhone againſt the ſun.
His noſe was aquiline, his eyes were blue,
Ruddy his lips, and freſh and fair his hue;
Some ſprinkled freckles on his face were ſeen,
Whoſe duſk ſet off the whiteneſs of the ſkin:
His awful preſence did the crowd ſurprize;
Nor durſt the raſh ſpectator meet his eyes,

Eyes that confeſs'd him born for kingly ſway,
So fierce, they flaſh'd intolerable day.
His age in nature's youthful prime appear'd,
And juſt began to bloom his yellow beard.
Whene'er he ſpoke, his voice was heard around,
Loud as a trumpet, with a ſilver ſound.
A laurel wreath'd his temples, freſh, and green;
And myrtle ſprigs, the marks of love, were mix'd between.
Upon his fiſt he bore, for his delight,
An eagle well reclaim'd, and lilly white.
His hundred knights attend him to the war,
All arm'd for battle, ſave their heads were bare.
Words, and devices blaz'd on ev'ry ſhield;
And pleaſing was the terror of the field:
For kings, and dukes, and barons you might ſee
Like ſparkling ſtars, though diff'rent in degree,
All for th' increaſe of arms, and love of chivalry.
Before the king, tame leopards led the way,
And troops of lions innocently play.
So Bacchus through the conquer'd Indies rode,
And beaſts in gambols friſk'd before their honeſt god.
In this array the war of either ſide,
Through Athens paſs'd with military pride.
At prime, they enter'd on the Sunday morn; [adorn.
Rich tap'ſtry ſpread the ſtreets, and flow'rs the pots
The town was all a jubilee of feaſts;
So Theſeus will'd, in honour of his gueſts:
Himſelf with open arms the kings embrac'd,
Then all the reſt in their degrees were grac'd.
No harbinger was needful for the night,
For ev'ry houſe was proud to lodge a knight.

I paſs the royal treat, nor muſt relate
The gifts beſtow'd, nor how the champions ſate;
Who firſt, who laſt, or how the knights addreſs'd
Their vows, or who was faireſt at the feaſt;
Whoſe voice, whoſe graceful dance did moſt ſurpriſe,
Soft am'rous ſighs, and ſilent love of eyes.
The rivals call my Muſe another way,
To ſing their vigils for th' enſuing day.
'Twas ebbing darkneſs, paſt the noon of night;
And Phoſpher, on the confines of the light,
Promis'd the ſun; e'er day began to ſpring
The tuneful lark already ſtretch'd her wing,
And flick'ring on her neſt, made ſhort eſſays to ſing.
When wakeful Palamon, preventing day,
Took to the royal liſts his early way,
To Venus at her fane, in her own houſe to pray;
There, falling on his knees before her ſhrine,
He thus implor'd with pray'rs her pow'r divine:
Creator Venus, genial pow'r of love,
The bliſs of men below, and gods above,
Beneath the ſliding ſun thou runn'ſt thy race,
Doſt fairer ſhine, and beſt become thy place.
For thee the winds their eaſtern blaſts forbear,
Thy month reveals the ſpring, and opens all the year.
Thee, goddeſs, thee, the ſtorms of winter fly;
Earth ſmiles with flow'rs renewing; laughs the ſky;
And birds to lays of love their tuneful notes apply:
For thee the lion loathes the taſte of blood,
And roaring hunts his females through the wood:
For thee the bulls rebellow through the groves,
And tempt the ſtream, and ſnuff their abſent loves.

'Tis thine, whate'er is pleaſant, good, or fair;
All nature is thy province, life thy care;
Thou mad'ſt the world, and doſt the world repair.
Thou gladder of the mount of Cytheron,
Increaſe of Jove, companion of the ſun;
If e'er Adonis touch'd thy tender heart,
Have pity, goddeſs, for thou know'ſt the ſmart:
Alas! I have not words to tell my grief;
To vent my ſorrow wou'd be ſome relief:
Light ſuff'rings give us leiſure to complain;
We groan, but cannot ſpeak, in greater pain.
O goddeſs, tell thyſelf what I would ſay,
Thou know'ſt it, and I feel too much to pray.
So grant my ſuit, as I inforce my might,
In love, to be thy champion and thy knight;
A ſervant to thy ſex, a ſlave to thee,
A foe profeſt to barren chaſtity.
Nor aſk I fame or honour of the field,
Nor chuſe I more to vanquiſh than to yield:
In my divine Emilia make me bleſs'd;
Let Fate, or partial Chance, diſpoſe the reſt:
Find thou the manner, and the means prepare;
Poſſeſſion, more than conqueſt, is my care.
Mars is the warrior's god; in him it lies,
On whom he favours, to confer the prize;
With ſmiling aſpect you ſerenely move
In your fifth orb, and rule the realm of love.
The Fates but only ſpin the coarſer clue,
The fineſt of the wool is left for you.
Spare me but one ſmall portion of the twine,
And let the Siſters cut below your line:

The reſt among the rubbiſh may they ſweep,
Or add it to the yarn of ſome old miſer's heap.
But if you this ambitious pray'r deny,
(A wiſh, I grant, beyond mortality);
Then let me ſink beneath proud Arcite's arms,
And I once dead, let him poſſeſs her charms.
Thus ended he; then, with obſervance due,
The ſacred incenſe on her altar threw.
The curling ſmoke mounts heavy from the fires;
At length it catches flame, and in a blaze expires.
At once the gracious goddeſs gave the ſign,
Her ſtatue ſhook, and trembl'd all the ſhrine:
Pleas'd Palamon the tardy omen took:
For, ſince the flames purſu'd the trailing ſmoke,
He knew his boon was granted; but the day
To diſtance driv'n, and joy adjourn'd with long delay.
Now Morn with roſy light had ſtreak'd the ſky,
Up roſe the ſun, and up roſe Emily;
Addreſs'd her early ſteps to Cynthia's fane,
In ſtate attended by her maiden train,
Who bore the veſts that holy rites require,
Incenſe, and od'rous gums, and cover'd fire;
The plenteous horns with pleaſant mead they crown;
Nor wanted ought beſides in honour of the moon.
Now while the temple ſmoak'd with hallow'd ſteam,
They waſh the virgin in a living ſtream.
The ſecret ceremonies I conceal,
Uncouth, perhaps unlawful to reveal:
But ſuch they were as pagan uſe requir'd,
Perform'd by women when the men retir'd,
Whoſe eyes profane, their chaſte myſterious rites
Might turn to ſcandal, or obſcene delights.

Well-meaners think no harm; but for the reſt,
Things ſacred they pervert, and ſilence is the beſt.
Her ſhining hair, uncomb'd, was looſely ſpread;
A crown of maſtleſs oak adorn'd her head;
When to the ſhrine approach'd the ſpotleſs maid,
Had kindling fires on either altar laid:
(The rites were ſuch as were obſerv'd of old,
By Statius in his Theban ſtory told;)
Then kneeling with her hands acroſs her breaſt,
Thus lowly ſhe preferr'd her chaſte requeſt.

O goddeſs, haunter of the woodland green,
To whom both heav'n and earth and ſeas are ſeen;
Queen of the nether ſkies, where half the year
Thy ſilver beams deſcend, and light the gloomy ſphere;
Goddeſs of maids, and conſcious of our hearts,
So keep me from the vengeance of thy darts,
Which Niobe's devoted iſſue felt, [were dealt:
When hiſſing through the ſkies the feather'd deaths
As I deſire to live a virgin-life,
Nor know the name of mother or of wife.
Thy votreſs from my tender years I am,
And love, like thee, the woods and ſylvan game.
Like death, thou know'ſt, I loath the nuptial ſtate,
And man, the tyrant of our ſex, I hate,
A lowly ſervant, but a lofty mate:
Where love is duty, on the female ſide;
On theirs meer ſenſual guſt, and fought with furly prid
Now by thy triple ſhape, as thou art ſeen
In heav'n, earth, hell, and ev'ry where a queen,
Grant this my firſt deſire; let diſcord ceaſe,
And make betwixt the rivals laſting peace.

Quench their hot fire, or far from me remove
The flame, and turn it on ſome other love.
Or if my frowning ſtars have ſo decreed,
That one muſt be rejected, one ſucceed,
Make him my Lord, within whoſe faithful breaſt
Is fix'd my image, and who loves me beſt.
But, oh! ev'n that avert! I chuſe it not,
But take it as the leaſt unhappy lot.
A maid I am, and of thy virgin-train;
Oh, let me ſtill that ſpotleſs name retain!
Frequent the foreſts, thy chaſte will obey,
And only make the beaſts of chace my prey!
The flames aſcend on either altar clear,
While thus the blameleſs maid addreſs'd her pray'r.
When lo! the burning fire that ſhone ſo bright,
Flew off, all ſudden, with extinguiſh'd light,
And left one altar dark, a little ſpace,
Which turn'd ſelf-kindl'd, and renew'd the blaze:
That other victor-flame a moment ſtood,
Then fell, and lifeleſs left th' extinguiſh'd wood;
For ever loſt, th' irrevocable light
Forſook the black'ning coals, and ſunk to night:
At either end it whiſtled as it flew,
And as the brands were green, ſo drop'd the dew;
Infected as it fell with ſweat of ſanguin hue.
The maid from that ill omen turn'd her eyes,
And with loud ſhrieks and clamours rent the ſkies,
Nor knew what ſignify'd the boding ſign, [divine.
But found the pow'rs diſpleas'd, and fear'd the wrath
Then ſhook the ſacred ſhrine, and ſudden light
Sprung through the vaulted roof, and made the temple bright.

The pow'r, behold! the pow'r in glory ſhone,
By her bent bow, and her keen arrows known:
The reſt, a huntreſs iſſuing from the wood,
Reclining on her cornel ſpear ſhe ſtood.
Then gracious thus began: Diſmiſs thy fear,
And heav'n's unchang'd decrees attentive hear:
More pow'rful gods have torn thee from my ſide,
Unwilling to reſign, and doom'd a bride:
The two contending knights are weigh'd above;
One Mars protects, and one the Queen of love:
But which the man, is in the thund'rer's breaſt,
This he pronounc'd, 'tis he who loves thee beſt.
The fire that, once extinct, reviv'd again,
Foreſhews the love alloted to remain.
Farewel, ſhe ſaid, and vaniſh'd from the place;
The ſheaf of arrows ſhook, and rattl'd in the caſe.
Agaſt at this, the royal virgin ſtood,
Diſclaim'd, and now no more a ſiſter of the wood:
But to the parting goddeſs thus ſhe pray'd;
Propitious ſtill be preſent to my aid,
Nor quite abandon your once favour'd maid.
Then ſighing ſhe return'd; but ſmil'd betwixt,
With hopes, and fears, and joys with ſorrows mix'd.
The next returning planetary hour
Of Mars, who ſhar'd the heptarchy of pow'r,
His ſteps bold Arcite to the temple bent,
T' adore with pagan rites the pow'r armipotent:
Then proſtrate, low before his altar lay,
And rais'd his manly voice, and thus began to pray.
Strong god of arms! whoſe iron ſcepter ſways
The freezing North, and Hyperborean ſeas,

And Scythian colds, and Thracia's wintry coaſt,
Where ſtand thy ſteeds, and thou art honour'd moſt:
There moſt; but ev'ry where thy pow'r is known;
The fortune of the fight is all thy own:
Terror is thine, and wild amazement flung
From out thy chariot, withers ev'n the ſtrong:
And diſarray and ſhameful rout enſue,
And force is added to the fainting crew.
Acknowledg'd as thou art, accept my pray'r,
If aught I have atchiev'd deſerve thy care:
If to my utmoſt pow'r with ſword and ſhield
I dar'd the death, unknowing how to yield,
And falling in my rank, ſtill kept the field:
Then let my arms prevail, by thee ſuſtain'd,
That Emily by conqueſt may be gain'd.
Have pity on my pains; nor thoſe unknown
To Mars, which, when a lover, were his own.
Venus, the public care of all above,
Thy ſtubborn heart has ſoftned into love:
Now by her blandiſhments and pow'rful charms,
When yielded, ſhe lay curling in thy arms;
Ev'n by thy ſhame, if ſhame it may be call'd,
When Vulcan had thee in his net inthrall'd;
O envy'd ignominy, ſweet diſgrace,
When ev'ry god that ſaw thee, wiſh'd thy place!
By thoſe dear pleaſures, aid my arms in fight,
And make me conquer in my patron's right:
For I am young, a novice in the trade,
The fool of love, unpractis'd to perſuade;
And want the ſoothing arts that catch the fair,
But caught myſelf, lie ſtruggling in the ſnare:

And ſhe I love, or laughs at all my pain, [dain.
Or knows her worth too well; and pays me with diſ-
For ſure I am, unleſs I win in arms,
To ſtand excluded from Emilia's charms:
Nor can my ſtrength avail, unleſs by thee
Endu'd with force, I gain the victory;
Then for the fire which warm'd thy gen'rous heart,
Pity thy ſubject's pains, and equal ſmart.
So be the morrow's ſweat and labour mine,
The palm and honour of the conqueſt thine:
Then ſhall the war, and ſtern debate, and ſtrife
Immortal, be the bus'neſs of my life;
And in thy fane, the duſty ſpoils among,
High on the burniſh'd roof, my banner ſhall be hung;
Rank'd with my champions bucklers, and below
With arms revers'd, th' atchievements of my foe:
And while theſe limbs the vital ſpirit feeds,
While day to night, and night to day ſucceeds,
Thy ſmoaking altar ſhall be fat with food
Of incenſe, and the grateful ſteam of blood;
Burnt off'rings morn and ev'ning ſhall be thine;
And fires eternal in thy temple ſhine.
This buſh of yellow beard, this length of hair,
Which from my birth inviolate I bear,
Guiltleſs of ſteel, and from the razor free,
Shall fall a plenteous crop, reſerv'd for thee.
So may my arms with victory be bleſt;
I aſk no more; let Fate diſpoſe the reſt.

The champion ceas'd; there follow'd in the cloſe
A hollow groan, a murm'ring wind aroſe;
The rings of ir'n, that on the doors were hung,
Sent out a jarring ſound, and harſhly rung:

The bolted gates flew open at the blaſt,
The ſtorm ruſh'd in; and Arcite ſtood agaſt:
The flames were blown aſide, yet ſhone they bright,
Fann'd by the wind, and gave a ruffl'd light:
Then from the ground a ſcent began to riſe,
Sweet-ſmelling, as accepted ſacrifice:
This omen pleas'd, and as the flames aſpire
With od'rous incenſe Arcite heaps the fire;
Nor wanted hymns to Mars, or heathen charms;
At length the nodding ſtatue claſh'd his arms,
And with a ſullen ſound, and feeble cry,
Half ſunk, and half pronounc'd the word of victory.
For this, with ſoul devout, he thank'd the god,
And of ſucceſs ſecure, return'd to his abode.
Theſe vows thus granted rais'd a ſtrife above,
Betwixt the God of War and Queen of Love.
She granting firſt, had right of time to plead;
But he had granted too, nor would recede.
Jove was for Venus; but he fear'd his wife,
And ſeem'd unwilling to decide the ſtrife;
Till Saturn from his leaden throne aroſe,
And found a way the diff'rence to compoſe:
Though ſparing of his grace, to miſchief bent,
He ſeldom does a good with good intent:
Wayward, but wiſe; by long experience taught
To pleaſe both parties, for ill ends, he ſought;
For this advantage age from youth has won,
As not to be outridden, though outrun.
By fortune he was now to Venus trin'd,
And with ſtern Mars in Capricorn was join'd;
Of him diſpoſing in his own abode,
He ſooth'd the goddeſs, while he gull'd the god:

Ceaſe, daughter, to complain; and ſtint the ſtrife;
Thy Palamon ſhall have his promis'd wife:
And Mars, the lord of conqueſt, in the fight
With palm and laurel ſhall adorn his knight.
Wide is my courſe, nor turn I to my place
Till length of time, and move with tardy pace.
Man feels me, when I preſs th' etherial plains,
My hand is heavy, and the wound remains.
Mine is the ſhipwreck, in a wat'ry ſign;
And in an earthy, the dark dungeon mine.
Cold ſhivering agues, melancholy care,
And bitter blaſting winds, and poiſon'd air,
Are mine, and wilful death, reſulting from deſpair.
The throtling quinſey 'tis my ſtar appoints,
And rheumatiſms I ſend to rack the joints:
When churls rebel againſt their native prince,
I arm their hands, and furniſh the pretence;
And houſing in the lion's hateful ſign,
Bought ſenates, and deſerting troops are mine.
Mine is the privy pois'ning; I command
Unkindly ſeaſons, and ungrateful land.
By me kings palaces are puſh'd to ground,
And miners, cruſh'd beneath their mines, are found.
'Twas I ſlew Samſon, when the pillar'd hall
Fell down, and cruſh'd the many with the fall.
My looking is the fire of peſtilence,
That ſweeps at once the people and the prince.
Now weep no more, but truſt thy grandſire's art;
Mars ſhall be pleas'd, and thou perform thy part.
'Tis ill, though different your complexions are,
The family of heav'n for men ſhould war.

Th' expedient pleas'd, where neither loſt his right:
Mars had the day, and Venus had the night.
The management they left to Chrono's care;
Now turn we to th' effect, and ſing the war.
In Athens, all was pleaſure, mirth, and play,
All proper to the Spring and ſprightly May:
Which ev'ry ſoul inſpir'd with ſuch delight,
'Twas juſting all the day, and love at night.
Heav'n ſmil'd, and gladded was the heart of man;
And Venus had the world, as when it firſt began.
At length in ſleep their bodies they compoſe,
And dream'd the future fight, and early roſe.
Now ſcarce the dawning day began to ſpring,
As at a ſignal giv'n, the ſtreets with clamours ring:
At once the crowd aroſe; confus'd and high
Ev'n from the heav'n was heard a ſhouting cry;
For Mars was early up, and rous'd the ſky.
The gods came downward to behold the wars,
Sharp'ning their ſights, and leaning from their ſtars.
The neighing of the gen'rous horſe was heard,
For battle by the buſy groom prepar'd:
Ruſtling of harneſs, ratling of the ſhield,
Clatt'ring of armour, furbiſh'd for the field.
Crowds to the caſtle mounted up the ſtreet,
Batt'ring the pavement with their courſers feet:
The greedy ſight might there devour the gold
Of glitt'ring arms, too dazling to behold;
And poliſh'd ſteel that caſt the view aſide,
And creſted morions, with their plumy pride.
Knights, with a long retinue of their ſquires,
In gaudy liv'ries march, and quaint attires.

One lac'd the helm, another held the lance:
A third the ſhining buckler did advance.
The courſer paw'd the ground with reſtleſs feet,
And ſnorting foam'd, and champ'd the golden bit.
The ſmiths and armourers on palfreys ride,
Files in their hands, and hammers at their ſide,
And nails for looſen'd ſpears, and thongs for ſhields provide.
The yeomen guard the ſtreets in ſeemly bands;
And clowns come crowding on, with cudgels in their hands.
The trumpets, next the gate, in order plac'd,
Attend the ſign to ſound the martial blaſt:
The palace-yard is fill'd with floating tides,
And the laſt comers bear the former to the ſides.
The throng is in the midſt; the common crew
Shut out, the hall admits the better few.
In knots they ſtand, or in a rank they walk,
Serious in aſpect, earneſt in their talk:
Factious, and fav'ring this or t'other ſide,
As their ſtrong fancies and weak reaſon guide:
Their wagers back their wiſhes; numbers hold
With the fair freckl'd king and beard of gold:
So vig'rous are his eyes, ſuch rays they caſt,
So prominent his eagle's beak is plac'd.
But moſt their looks on the black monarch bend,
His riſing muſcles, and his brawn commend;
His double-biting ax, and beamy ſpear,
Each aſking a gigantic force to rear.
All ſpoke as partial favour mov'd the mind;
And, ſafe themſelves, at others coſt divin'd.

Wak'd by the cries, th' Athenian chief aroſe,
The knightly forms of combat to diſpoſe;
And paſſing through th' obſequious guards, he ſat
Conſpicuous on a throne, ſublime in ſtate;
There, for the two contending knights he ſent:
Arm'd cap-a-pee, with rev'rence low they bent;
He ſmil'd on both, and with ſuperior look
Alike their offer'd adoration took.
The people preſs on ev'ry ſide to ſee
Their awful prince, and hear his high decree.
Then ſigning to the heralds with his hand,
They gave his orders from their lofty ſtand.
Silence is thrice enjoin'd; then thus aloud [crowd.
The king at arms beſpeaks the knights and liſt'ning
Our ſovereign lord has ponder'd in his mind
The means to ſpare the blood of gentle kind;
And of his grace, and inborn clemency,
He modifies his firſt ſevere decree;
The keener edge of battle to rebate,
The troops for honour fighting, not for hate.
He wills not death ſhou'd terminate their ſtrife;
And wounds, if wounds enſue, be ſhort of life.
But iſſues, ere the fight, his dread command,
That flings afar, and ponyards hand to hand,
Be baniſh'd from the field; that none ſhall dare
With ſhortned ſword to ſtab in cloſer war;
But in fair combat fight with manly ſtrength,
Nor puſh with biting point, but ſtrike at length.
The tourney is allow'd but one career,
Of the tough aſh, with the ſharp-grinded ſpear.
But knights unhors'd may riſe from off the plain,
And fight on foot, their honour to regain.

Nor, if at miſchief taken, on the ground
Be ſlain, but pris'ners to the pillar bound,
At either barrier plac'd; nor (captives made,)
Be freed, or arm'd anew the fight invade.
The chief of either ſide, bereft of life,
Or yielded to his foe, concludes the ſtrife.
Thus dooms the lord: Now valiant knights and young,
Fight each his fill with ſwords and maces long.
The herald ends; the vaulted firmament
With loud acclaims, and vaſt applauſe is rent:
Heav'n guard a prince ſo gracious and ſo good,
So juſt, and yet ſo provident of blood!
This was the gen'ral cry. The trumpets ſound,
And warlike ſymphony is heard around.
The marching troops through Athens take their way,
The great Earl-Marſhal orders their array.
The fair from high the paſſing pomp behold;
A rain of flow'rs is from the windows roll'd.
The caſements are with golden tiſſue ſpread,
And horſes hoofs, for earth, on ſilken tap'ſtry tread.
The king goes midmoſt, and the rivals ride
In equal rank, and cloſe his either ſide.
Next after theſe, there rode the royal wife,
With Emily, the cauſe, and the reward of ſtrife.
The following cavalcade by three and three,
Proceed by titles marſhall'd in degree.
Thus through the ſouthern gate they take their way,
And at the liſts arriv'd e'er prime of day.
There, parting from the king, the chiefs divide,
And wheeling eaſt and weſt, before their many ride.
Th' Athenian monarch mounts his throne on high,
And after him the queen and Emily.

Next theſe, the kindred of the crown are grac'd
With nearer ſeats, and lords by ladies plac'd.
Scarce were they ſeated, when with clamours loud,
In ruſh'd at once a rude promiſcuous crowd:
The guards, and then each other overbare,
And in a moment throng the ſpacious theatre.
Now chang'd the jarring noiſe to whiſpers low,
As winds forſaking ſeas more ſoftly blow;
When at the weſtern gate, on which the car
Is plac'd aloft, that bears the God of War,
Proud Arcite ent'ring arm'd before his train,
Stops at the barrier, and divides the plain.
Red was his banner, and diſplay'd abroad,
The bloody colours of his patron god.
At that ſelf-moment enters Palamon,
The gate of Venus, and the riſing Sun;
Wav'd by the wanton winds, his banner flies,
All maiden white, and ſhares the peoples eyes.
From eaſt to weſt, look all the world around,
Two troops ſo match'd were never to be found:
Such bodies built for ſtrength, of equal age,
In ſtature fix'd; ſo proud an equipage.
The niceſt eye cou'd no diſtinction make,
Where lay th' advantage, or what ſide to take.
Thus rang'd, the herald for the laſt proclaims
A ſilence, while they anſwer'd to their names:
For ſo the king decreed, to ſhun with care
The fraud of muſters falſe, the common bane of war.
The tale was juſt, and then the gates were clos'd;
And chief to chief, and troop to troop oppos'd.
The heralds laſt retir'd, and loudly cry'd,
The fortune of the field be fairly try'd.

At this, the challenger with fierce defy
His trumpet ſounds; the challeng'd makes reply:
With clangor rings the field, reſounds the vaulted ſky.
Their vizors clos'd, their lances in the reſt,
Or at the helmet pointed, or the creſt;
They vaniſh from the barrier, ſpeed the race,
And ſpurring ſee decreaſe the middle ſpace.
A cloud of ſmoke envelops either hoſt,
And all at once the combatants are loſt:
Darkling they join adverſe, and ſhock unſeen,
Courſers with courſers juſtling, men with men;
As lab'ring in eclipſe, a while they ſtay,
Till the next blaſt of wind reſtores the day.
They look anew; the beauteous form of fight
Is chang'd, and war appears, a griſly ſight.
Two troops in fair array one moment ſhow'd,
The next, a field with fallen bodies ſtrow'd;
Not half the number in their ſeats are found,
But men and ſteeds lie grov'ling on the ground.
The points of ſpears are ſtuck within the ſhield,
The ſteeds without their riders ſcour the field.
The knights unhors'd, on foot renew the fight;
The glitt'ring faulchions caſt a gleaming light;
Hauberks and helms are hew'd with many a wound;
Out ſpins the ſtreaming blood, and dies the ground.
The mighty maces with ſuch haſte deſcend,
They break the bones, and make the ſolid armour bend.
This thruſts amid the throng with furious force;
Down goes, at once, the horſeman and the horſe.
That courſer ſtumbles on the fallen ſteed,
And flound'ring, throws the rider o'er his head.

One rolls along, a foot-ball to his foes ;
One with a broken truncheon deals his blows.
This halting, this difabl'd with his wound,
In triumph led, is to the pillar bound,
Where by the king's award he muſt abide :
There goes a captive led on t' other ſide.
By fits they ceaſe; and leaning on the lance,
Take breath a while, and to new fight advance.
Full oft the rivals met, and neither ſpar'd
His utmoſt force, and each forgot to ward.
The head of this was to the ſaddle bent,
That other backward to the crupper ſent :
Both were by turns unhors'd ; the jealous blows
Fall thick and heavy, when on foot they cloſe.
So deep their faulchions bite, that ev'ry ſtroke [took.
Pierc'd to the quick; and equal wounds they gave and
Born far aſunder by the tides of men,
Like adamant and ſteel they meet again.
So when a tyger ſucks the bullock's blood,
A famiſh'd lion, iſſuing from the wood,
Roars lordly fierce, and challenges the food.
Each claims poſſeſſion, neither will obey,
But both their paws are faſten'd on the prey :
They bite, they tear; and while in vain they ſtrive,
The ſwains come arm'd between, and both to diſtance drive.
At length, as fate foredoom'd, and all things tend
By courſe of time to their appointed end ;
So when the ſun to weſt was far declin'd,
And both afreſh in mortal battle join'd,
The ſtrong Emetrius came in Arcite's aid,
And Palamon with odds was overlaid ;

For turning ſhort, he ſtruck with all his might
Full on the helmet of th' unwary knight.
Deep was the wound; he ſtagger'd with the blow,
And turn'd him to his unexpected foe;
Whom with ſuch force he ſtruck, he fell'd him down,
And cleft the circle of his golden crown.
But Arcite's men, who now prevail'd in fight,
Twice ten at once ſurround the ſingle knight:
O'erpow'r'd at length, they force him to the ground,
Unyielded as he was, and to the pillar bound;
And king Lycurgus, while he fought in vain
His friend to free, was tumbl'd on the plain.
Who now laments but Palamon, compell'd
No more to try the fortune of the field!
And worſe than death, to view with hateful eyes
His rival's conqueſt, and renounce the prize!
The royal judge on his tribunal plac'd,
Who had beheld the fight from firſt to laſt,
Bad ceaſe the war; pronouncing from on high
Arcite of Thebes had won the beauteous Emily.
The ſound of trumpets to the voice reply'd,
And round the royal liſts the heralds cry'd,
Arcite of Thebes has won the beauteous bride.
The people rend the ſkies with vaſt applauſe;
All own the chief, when fortune owns the cauſe.
Arcite is own'd ev'n by the gods above,
And conqu'ring Mars inſults the Queen of love.
So laugh'd he, when the rightful Titan fail'd,
And Jove's uſurping arms in heav'n prevail'd.
Laugh'd all the pow'rs who favour tyranny;
And all the ſtanding army of the ſky.

But Venus with dejected eyes appears,
And weeping, on the lists distill'd her tears;
Her will refus'd, which grieves a woman most,
And in her champion foil'd, the cause of love is lost.
Till Saturn said, Fair daughter, now be still,
The blust'ring fool has satisfy'd his will:
His boon is giv'n; his knight has gain'd the day,
But lost the prize; th' arrears are yet to pay.
Thy hour is come, and mine the care shall be
To please thy knight, and set thy promise free.
Now while the heralds run the lists around,
And Arcite, Arcite, heav'n and earth resound;
A miracle (nor less it could be call'd)
Their joy with unexpected sorrow pall'd.
The victor knight had laid his helm aside,
Part for his ease, the greater part for pride:
Bare headed, popularly low he bow'd,
And paid the salutations of the crowd.
Then spurring at full speed, ran endlong on
Where Theseus sat on his imperial throne;
Furious he drove, and upward cast his eye,
Where next the queen was plac'd his Emily;
Then passing, to the saddle-bow he bent,
A sweet regard the gracious virgin lent:
(For women, to the brave an easy prey,
Still follow fortune, where she leads the way:)
Just then, from earth sprung out a flashing fire,
By Pluto sent, at Saturn's bad desire;
The startling steed was seiz'd with sudden fright,
And, bounding, o'er the pummel cast the knight;
Forward he flew, and pitching on his head,
He quiver'd with his feet, and lay for dead.

Black was his count'nance in a little ſpace,
For all the blood was gather'd in his face.
Help was at hand; they rear'd him from the ground,
And from his cumbrous arms his limbs unbound:
Then lanc'd a vein, and watch'd returning breath;
It came, but clogg'd with ſymptoms of his death.
The ſaddle-bow the noble parts had preſs'd,
All bruis'd and mortify'd his manly breaſt.
Him ſtill entranc'd, and in a litter laid,
They bore from field, and to his bed convey'd.
At length he wak'd, and with a feeble cry,
The word he firſt pronounc'd was Emily.

Mean time the king, though inwardly he mourn'd,
In pomp triumphant to the town return'd,
Attended by the chiefs, who fought the field;
(Now friendly mix'd, and in one troop compell'd;)
Compos'd his looks to counterfeited cheer,
And bade them not for Arcite's life to fear.
But that which gladded all the warrior train,
Though moſt were ſorely wounded, none were ſlain.
The ſurgeons ſoon deſpoil'd 'em of their arms,
And ſome with ſalves they cure, and ſome with charms;
Foment the bruiſes, and the pains aſſuage, [ſage.
And heal their inward hurts with ſov'reign draughts of
The king in perſon viſits all around,
Comforts the ſick, congratulates the ſound;
Honours the princely chiefs, rewards the reſt,
And holds for thrice three days a royal feaſt.
None was diſgrac'd; for falling is no ſhame;
And cowardice alone is loſs of fame.
The vent'rous knight is from the ſaddle thrown;
But 'tis the fault of fortune, not his own.

If crowns and palms the conqu'ring ſide adorn,
The victor under better ſtars was born:
The brave man ſeeks not popular applauſe,
Nor overpow'r'd with arms, deſerts his cauſe;
Unſham'd, tho' foil'd, he does the beſt he can;
Force is of brutes, but honour is of man.

Thus Theſeus ſmil'd on all with equal grace;
And each was ſet according to his place.
With eaſe were reconcil'd the diff'ring parts,
For envy never dwells in noble hearts.
At length they took their leave, the time expir'd;
Well pleas'd, and to their ſev'ral homes retir'd.

Mean while the health of Arcite ſtill impairs:
From bad proceeds to worſe, and mocks the leeches cares:
Swoln is his breaſt, his inward pains increaſe,
All means are us'd, and all without ſucceſs.
The clotted blood lies heavy on his heart,
Corrupts, and there remains in ſpite of art:
Nor breathing veins, nor cupping will prevail;
All outward remedies and inward fail:
The mold of Nature's fabric is deſtroy'd,
Her veſſels diſcompos'd, her virtue void;
The bellows of his lungs begins to ſwell;
All out of frame is ev'ry ſecret cell,
Nor can the good receive, nor bad expel.
Thoſe breathing organs thus within oppreſt,
With venom ſoon diſtend the ſinews of his breaſt.
Nought profits him to ſave abandon'd life,
Nor vomits upward aid, nor downward laxative.
The midmoſt region batter'd, and deſtroy'd,
When Nature cannot work, th' effect of art is void.

For phyſic can but mend our crazy ſtate,
Patch an old building, not a new create.
Arcite is doom'd to die in all his pride,
Muſt leave his youth, and yield his beauteous bride,
Gain'd hardly, againſt right, and unenjoy'd.
When 'twas declar'd, all hope of life was paſt,
Conſcience, that of all phyſic works the laſt,
Caus'd him to ſend for Emily in haſte.
With her, at his deſire, came Palamon;
Then on his pillow rais'd, he thus begun.
No language can expreſs the ſmalleſt part
Of what I feel, and ſuffer in my heart,
For you, whom beſt I love and value moſt;
But to your ſervice I bequeath my ghoſt;
Which from this mortal body when unty'd,
Unſeen, unheard, ſhall hover at your ſide;
Nor fright you waking, nor your ſleep offend,
But wait officious, and your ſteps attend:
How I have lov'd, excuſe my faultring tongue,
My ſpirits feeble, and my pains are ſtrong:
This I may ſay, I only grieve to die,
Becauſe I loſe my charming Emily:
To die, when heav'n had put you in my pow'r,
Fate could not chuſe a more malicious hour!
What greater curſe cou'd envious Fortune give,
Than juſt to die when I began to live!
Vain men, how vaniſhing a bliſs we crave,
Now warm in love, now with'ring in the grave!
Never, O never more to ſee the ſun!
Still dark, in a damp vault, and ſtill alone!
This fate is common; but I loſe my breath
Near bliſs, and yet not bleſs'd before my death.

Farewel; but take me dying in your arms,
'Tis all I can enjoy of all your charms:
This hand I cannot but in death resign;
Ah, could I live! but while I live 'tis mine.
I feel my end approach, and thus embrac'd,
Am pleas'd to die; but hear me speak my last.
Ah! my sweet foe, for you, and you alone,
I broke my faith with injur'd Palamon.
But love the sense of right and wrong confounds,
Strong love and proud ambition have no bounds.
And much I doubt, should Heav'n my life prolong,
I shou'd return to justify my wrong:
For while my former flames remain within,
Repentance is but want of pow'r to sin.
With mortal hatred I pursu'd his life,
Nor he, nor you, were guilty of the strife!
Nor I, but as I lov'd: Yet all combin'd,
Your beauty, and my impotence of mind,
And his concurrent flame, that blew my fire;
For still our kindred souls had one desire.
He had a moment's right, in point of time,
Had I seen first, then his had been the crime.
Fate made it mine, and justify'd his right;
Nor holds this earth a more deserving knight,
For virtue, valour, and for noble blood,
Truth, honour, all that is compris'd in good;
So help me heav'n, in all the world is none
So worthy to be lov'd as Palamon.
He loves you too, with such a holy fire,
As will not, cannot, but with life expire:
Our vow'd affections both have often try'd,
Nor any love but yours cou'd ours divide.

Then by my love's inviolable band,
By my long ſuff'ring, and my ſhort command,
If e'er you plight your vows when I am gone,
Have pity on the faithful Palamon.
This was his laſt; for death came on amain,
And exercis'd below his iron reign;
Then upward to the ſeat of life he goes;
Senſe fled before him, what he touch'd he froze:
Yet cou'd he not his cloſing eyes withdraw,
Though leſs and leſs of Emily he ſaw:
So, ſpeechleſs, for a little ſpace he lay; [way.
Then graſp'd the hand he held, and ſigh'd his ſoul a-
But whither went his ſoul, let ſuch relate
Who ſearch the ſecrets of the future ſtate:
Divines can ſay but what themſelves believe;
Strong proofs they have, but not demonſtrative.
For, were all plain, then all ſides muſt agree,
And faith itſelf be loſt in certainty.
To live uprightly then is ſure the beſt,
To ſave ourſelves, and not to damn the reſt.
The ſoul of Arcite went, where heathens go;
Who better live than we, though leſs they know.
In Palamon a manly grief appears;
Silent, he wept, aſham'd to ſhew his tears.
Emilia ſhriek'd but once, and then oppreſt
With ſorrow, ſunk upon her lover's breaſt.
Till Theſeus in his arms convey'd with care,
Far from ſo ſad a ſight, the ſwooning fair.
'Twere loſs of time her ſorrow to relate;
Ill bears the ſex a youthful lover's fate,
When juſt approaching to the nuptial ſtate:

But like a low-hung cloud it rains ſo faſt,
That all at once it falls, and cannot laſt.
The face of things is chang'd, and Athens now,
That laugh'd ſo late, becomes the ſcene of woe:
Matrons and maids, both ſexes, ev'ry ſtate,
With tears lament the knight's untimely fate.
Not greater grief in falling Troy was ſeen
For Hector's death; but Hector was not then.
Old men with duſt deform'd their hoary hair,
The women beat their breaſts, their cheeks they tear.
Why would'ſt thou go, with one conſent they cry,
When thou hadſt gold enough, and Emily?
Theſeus himſelf, who ſhou'd have cheer'd the grief
Of others, wanted now the ſame relief.
Old Egeus only could revive his ſon,
Who various changes of the world had known;
And ſtrange viciſſitudes of human fate,
Still alt'ring, never in a ſteady ſtate;
Good after ill, and after pain delight;
Alternate, like the ſcenes of day and night:
Since ev'ry man who lives, is born to die,
And none can boaſt ſincere felicity;
With equal mind, what happens, let us bear,
Nor joy, nor grieve too much for things beyond our care.
Like pilgrims, to th' appointed place we tend;
The world's an inn, and death's the journey's end.
Ev'n kings but play; and when their part is done,
Some other, worſe or better, mount the throne.
With words like theſe the crowd was ſatisfy'd,
And ſo they would have been, had Theſeus dy'd.

But he, their king, was lab'ring in his mind
A fitting place for funeral pomps to find,
Which were in honour of the dead design'd.
And after long debate, at last he found
(As love itself had mark'd the spot of ground)
That grove for ever green, that conscious lawn,
Where he with Palamon fought hand to hand:
That where he fed his amorous desires
With soft complaints, and felt his hottest fires;
There other flames might waste his earthly part,
And burn his limbs, where love had burn'd his heart.

This once resolv'd, the peasants were enjoin'd
Sere-wood, and fires, and dodder'd oaks to find.
With sounding axes to the grove they go,
Fell, split, and lay the feuel on a row,
Vulcanian food: A bier is next prepar'd,
On which the lifeless body should be rear'd,
Cover'd with cloth of gold, on which was laid
The corpse of Arcite, in like robes array'd.
White gloves were on his hands, and on his head
A wreath of laurel, mix'd with myrtle, spread.
A sword keen-edg'd within his right he held,
The warlike emblem of the conquer'd field.
Bare was his manly visage on the bier;
Menac'd his count'nance; ev'n in death severe.
Then to the palace-hall they bore the knight,
To lie in solemn state, a public sight.
Groans, cries, and howlings fill the crowded place,
And unaffected sorrow sat on ev'ry face.
Sad Palamon above the rest appears,
In sable garments, dew'd with gushing tears:

His aubourn locks on either ſhoulder flow'd,
Which to the fun'ral of his friend he vow'd:
But Emily, as chief, was next his ſide,
A virgin-widow, and a mourning bride.
And that the princely obſequies might be
Perform'd according to his high degree,
The ſteed that bore him living to the fight,
Was trapp'd with poliſh'd ſteel, all ſhining bright,
And cover'd with th' atchievements of the knight.
The riders rode abreaſt, and one his ſhield,
His lance of cornel-wood another held;
The third his bow, and, glorious to behold,
The coſtly quiver, all of burniſh'd gold.
The nobleſt of the Grecians next appear,
And weeping, on their ſhoulders bore the bier;
With ſober pace they march'd, and often ſtay'd,
And through the maſter-ſtreet the corpſe convey'd.
The houſes to their tops with black were ſpread,
And ev'n the pavements were with mourning hid.
The right ſide of the pall old Egeus kept,
And on the left the royal Theſeus wept:
Each bore a golden bowl of work divine,
With honey fill'd, and milk, and mix'd with ruddy wine.
Then Palamon the kinſman of the ſlain,
And after him appear'd th' illuſtrious train:
To grace the pomp came Emily the bright,
With cover'd fire the fun'ral pile to light.
With high devotion was the ſervice made,
And all the rites of pagan honour paid:
So lofty was the pile, a Parthian bow,
With vigour drawn, muſt ſend the ſhaft below.

The bottom was full twenty fathom broad,
With crackling ſtraw beneath in due proportion ſtrow'd.
The fabric ſeem'd a wood of riſing green,
With ſulphur and bitumen caſt between,
To feed the flames; the trees were unctuous fir,
And mountain-aſh, the mother of the ſpear;
The mourner eugh, and builder oak were there:
The beech, the ſwimming alder, and the plane,
Hard box, and linden of a ſofter grain,
And laurels which the gods for conqu'ring chiefs ordain.
How they were rank'd ſhall reſt untold by me,
With nameleſs nymphs that liv'd in ev'ry tree;
Nor how the Dryads and the woodland train,
Diſherited, ran howling o'er the plain:
Nor how the birds to foreign ſeats repair'd,
Or beaſts, that bolted out, and ſaw the foreſt bar'd:
Nor how the ground, now clear'd, with ghaſtly fright,
Beheld the ſudden ſun, a ſtranger to the light.
The ſtraw, as firſt I ſaid, was laid below;
Of chips and ſere-wood was the ſecond row;
The third of greens, and timber newly fell'd;
The fourth high ſtage the fragrant odours held,
And pearls, and precious ſtones, and rich array;
In midſt of which, embalm'd, the body lay.
The ſervice ſung, the maid with mourning eyes
The ſtubble fir'd; the ſmouldring flames ariſe:
This office done, ſhe ſunk upon the ground;
But what ſhe ſpoke, recover'd from her ſwoond,
I want the wit in moving words to dreſs;
But by themſelves the tender ſex may gueſs.
While the devouring fire was burning faſt,
Rich jewels in the flame the wealthy caſt;

And ſome their ſhields, and ſome their lances threw,
And gave the warrior's ghoſt a warrior's due.
Full bowls of wine, of honey, milk, and blood,
Were pour'd upon the pile of burning wood,
And hiſſing flames receive, and hungry lick the food.
Then thrice the mounted ſquadrons ride around
The fire, and Arcite's name they thrice reſound:
Hail, and farewel, they ſhouted thrice amain,
Thrice facing to the left, and thrice they turn'd again:
Still as they turn'd, they beat their clatt'ring ſhields;
The women mix their cries; and clamour fills the fields.
The warlike wakes continu'd all the night,
And fun'ral games were plaid at new returning light:
Who naked wreſtl'd beſt, beſmear'd with oil,
Or who with gauntlets gave or took the foil,
I will not tell you, nor wou'd you attend;
But briefly haſte to my long ſtory's end.
I paſs the reſt; the year was fully mourn'd,
And Palamon long ſince to Thebes return'd;
When, by the Grecians general conſent,
At Athens Theſeus held his parliament:
Among the laws that paſs'd, it was decreed,
That conquer'd Thebes from bondage ſhou'd be freed;
Reſerving homage to th' Athenian throne,
To which the ſovereign ſummon'd Palamon.
Unknowing of the cauſe, he took his way,
Mournful in mind, and ſtill in black array.
The monarch mounts the throne, and plac'd on high,
Commands into the court the beauteous Emily:
So call'd, ſhe came; the ſenate roſe, and paid
Becoming rev'rence to the royal maid.

And firſt ſoft whiſpers through th' aſſembly went;
With ſilent wonder then they watch'd th' event:
All huſh'd, the king aroſe with awful grace,
Deep thought was in his breaſt, and counſel in his face.
At length he ſigh'd; and having firſt prepar'd
Th' attentive audience, thus his will declar'd.

The cauſe and ſpring of motion, from above
Hung down on earth the golden chain of love:
Great was th' effect, and high was his intent,
When peace among the jarring ſeeds he ſent.
Fire, flood, and earth, and air by this were bound,
And love, the common link, the new creation crown'd.
The chain ſtill holds; for though the forms decay,
Eternal matter never wears away:
The ſame First-mover certain bounds has plac'd,
How long thoſe periſhable forms ſhall laſt;
Nor can they laſt beyond the time aſſign'd
By that all-ſeeing and all-making Mind:
Shorten their hours they may; for will is free;
But never paſs th' appointed deſtiny.
So men oppreſs'd, when weary of their breath,
Throw off the burden, and ſubborn their death.
Then ſince thoſe forms begin, and have their end,
On ſome unalter'd cauſe they ſure depend.
Parts of the whole are we; but God the whole;
Who gives us life, and animating ſoul.
For Nature cannot from a part derive
That being, which the whole can only give:
He perfect, ſtable; but imperfect we,
Subject to change, and diff'rent in degree.
Plants, beaſts, and man; and as our organs are,
We more or leſs of his perfection ſhare.

But by a long deſcent, th' etherial fire
Corrupts; and forms, the mortal part, expire;
As he withdraws his virtue, ſo they paſs,
And the ſame matter makes another maſs:
This law th' omniſcient pow'r was pleas'd to give,
That ev'ry kind ſhould by ſucceſſion live,
That individuals die, his will ordains;
The propagated ſpecies ſtill remains.
The monarch oak, the patriarch of the trees,
Shoots riſing up, and ſpreads by ſlow degrees;
Three centuries he grows, and three he ſtays,
Supreme in ſtate; and in three more decays.
So wears the paving pebble in the ſtreet,
And towns and tow'rs their fatal periods meet.
So rivers, rapid once, now naked lie,
Forſaken of their ſprings, and leave their channels dry.
So man, at firſt a drop, dilates with heat,
Then form'd, the little heart begins to beat;
Secret he feeds, unknowing in the cell;
At length, for hatching ripe, he breaks the ſhell,
And ſtruggles into breath, and cries for aid;
Then, helpleſs, in his mother's lap is laid.
He creeps, he walks, and iſſuing into man,
Grudges their life from whence his own began.
Retchleſs of laws, affects to rule alone,
Anxious to reign, and reſtleſs on the throne:
Firſt vegetive, then feels, and reaſons laſt;
Rich of three ſouls, and lives all three to waſte.
Some thus; but thouſands more in flow'r of age:
For few arrive to run the latter ſtage.
Sunk in the firſt, in battle ſome are ſlain,
And others whelm'd beneath the ſtormy main.

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When peace among the jarring ſeeds he ſent.
Fire, flood, and earth, and air by this were bound,
And love, the common link, the new creation crown'd.
The chain ſtill holds; for though the forms decay,
Eternal matter never wears away:
The ſame Firſt-mover certain bounds has plac'd,
How long thoſe periſhable forms ſhall laſt;
Nor can they laſt beyond the time aſſign'd
By that all-ſeeing and all-making Mind:
Shorten their hours they may; for will is free;
But never paſs th' appointed deſtiny.
So men oppreſs'd, when weary of their breath,
Throw off the burden, and ſubborn their death.
Then ſince thoſe forms begin, and have their end,
On ſome unalter'd cauſe they ſure depend.
Parts of the whole are we; but God the whole;
Who gives us life, and animating ſoul.
For Nature cannot from a part derive
That being, which the whole can only give:
He perfect, ſtable; but imperfect we,
Subject to change, and diff'rent in degree.
Plants, beaſts, and man; and as our organs are,
We more or leſs of his perfection ſhare.

But by a long deſcent, th' etherial fire
Corrupts; and forms, the mortal part, expire;
As he withdraws his virtue, ſo they paſs,
And the ſame matter makes another maſs:
This law th' omniſcient pow'r was pleas'd to give,
That ev'ry kind ſhould by ſucceſſion live,
That individuals die, his will ordains;
The propagated ſpecies ſtill remains.
The monarch oak, the patriarch of the trees,
Shoots riſing up, and ſpreads by ſlow degrees;
Three centuries he grows, and three he ſtays,
Supreme in ſtate; and in three more decays.
So wears the paving pebble in the ſtreet,
And towns and tow'rs their fatal periods meet.
So rivers, rapid once, now naked lie,
Forſaken of their ſprings, and leave their channels dry.
So man, at firſt a drop, dilates with heat,
Then form'd, the little heart begins to beat;
Secret he feeds, unknowing in the cell;
At length, for hatching ripe, he breaks the ſhell,
And ſtruggles into breath, and cries for aid;
Then, helpleſs, in his mother's lap is laid.
He creeps, he walks, and iſſuing into man,
Grudges their life from whence his own began.
Retchleſs of laws, affects to rule alone,
Anxious to reign, and reſtleſs on the throne:
Firſt vegetive, then feels, and reaſons laſt;
Rich of three ſouls, and lives all three to waſte.
Some thus; but thouſands more in flow'r of age:
For few arrive to run the latter ſtage.
Sunk in the firſt, in battle ſome are ſlain,
And others whelm'd beneath the ſtormy main.

What makes all this, but Jupiter the king,
At whoſe command we periſh, and we ſpring?
Then 'tis our beſt, ſince thus ordain'd to die,
To make a virtue of neceſſity.
Take what he gives, ſince to rebel is vain;
The bad grows better, which we well ſuſtain;
And cou'd we chuſe the time, and chuſe aright,
'Tis beſt to die, our honour at the height.
When we have done our anceſtors no ſhame,
But ſerv'd our friends, and well ſecur'd our fame;
Then ſhould we wiſh our happy life to cloſe,
And leave no more for Fortune to diſpoſe;
So ſhould we make our death a glad relief,
From future ſhame, from ſickneſs, and from grief:
Enjoying while we live the preſent hour,
And dying in our excellence and flow'r.
Then round our death-bed ev'ry friend ſhou'd run,
And joyous of our conqueſt early won:
While the malicious world, with envious tears,
Shou'd grudge our happy end, and wiſh it theirs.
Since then our Arcite is with honour dead,
Why ſhou'd we mourn, that he ſo ſoon is freed,
Or call untimely, what the gods decreed?
With grief as juſt a friend may be deplor'd,
From a foul priſon to free air reſtor'd.
Ought he to thank his kinſman, or his wife,
Cou'd tears recall him into wretched life!
Their ſorrow hurts themſelves; on him is loſt;
And worſe than both, offends his happy ghoſt.
What then remains, but after paſt annoy,
To take the good viciſſitude of joy?

To thank the gracious gods for what they give,
Poſſeſs our ſouls, and while we live, to live?
Ordain we then two ſorrows to combine,
And in one point th' extremes of grief to join;
That thence reſulting joy may be renew'd,
As jarring notes in harmony conclude.
Then I propoſe, that Palamon ſhall be
In marriage join'd with beauteous Emily;
For which already I have gain'd th' aſſent
Of my free people in full parliament.
Long love to her has born the faithful knight,
And well deſerv'd, had fortune done him right:
'Tis time to mend her fault; ſince Emily
By Arcite's death from former vows is free:
If you, fair ſiſter, ratify th' accord,
And take him for your huſband, and your lord.
'Tis no diſhonour to confer your grace
On one deſcended from a royal race:
And, were he leſs, yet years of ſervice paſt
From grateful ſouls exact reward at laſt:
Pity is Heav'n's and your's: Nor can ſhe find
A throne ſo ſoft as in a woman's mind.

He ſaid; ſhe bluſh'd; and as o'eraw'd by might,
Seem'd to give Theſeus, what ſhe gave the knight.
Then turning to the Theban, thus he ſaid:
Small arguments are needful to perſuade
Your temper to comply with my command;
And ſpeaking thus, he gave Emilia's hand.
Smil'd Venus, to behold her own true knight
Obtain the conqueſt, though he loſt the fight,
And bleſs'd with nuptial bliſs the ſweet laborious night.

Eros, and Anteros, on either ſide,
One fir'd the bridegroom, and one warm'd the bride;
And long-attending Hymen from above
Showr'd on the bed the whole Idalian grove.
All of a tenour was their after-life,
No day diſcolour'd with domeſtic ſtrife;
No jealouſy, but mutual truth believ'd,
Secure repoſe, and kindneſs undeceiv'd.
Thus Heav'n, beyond the compaſs of his thought,
Sent him the bleſſing he ſo dearly bought.
So may the Queen of Love long duty bleſs,
And all true lovers find the ſame ſucceſs.

The End of the Third Book.

TO

MY HONOUR'D KINSMAN,

JOHN DRYDEN,

OF

CHESTERTON,

IN THE

COUNTY of HUNTINGDON,

ESQUIRE.

HOW bleſs'd is he, who leads a country life,
Unvex'd with anxious cares, and void of ſtrife!
Who ſtudying peace, and ſhunning civil rage,
Enjoy'd his youth, and now enjoys his age:
All who deſerve his love, he makes his own;
And, to be lov'd himſelf, needs only to be known.
Juſt, good, and wiſe, contending neighbours come
From your award, to wait their final doom;
And, foes before, return in friendſhip home.
Without their coſt, you terminate the cauſe;
And ſave th' expence of long litigious laws;

Where ſuits are travers'd; and ſo little won,
That he who conquers, is but laſt undone:
Such are not your decrees; but ſo deſign'd,
The ſanction leaves a laſting peace behind;
Like your own ſoul, ſerene; a pattern of your mind.

Promoting concord, and compoſing ſtrife,
Lord of yourſelf, uncumber'd with a wife;
Where, for a year, a month, perhaps a night,
Long penitence ſucceeds a ſhort delight:
Minds are ſo hardly match'd, that ev'n the firſt,
Though pair'd by Heav'n, in Paradiſe, were curs'd.
For man and woman, though in one they grow,
Yet, firſt or laſt, return again to two.
He to God's image, ſhe to his was made;
So, farther from the fount, the ſtream at random ſtray'd.

How cou'd he ſtand, when put to double pain,
He muſt a weaker than himſelf ſuſtain!
Each might have ſtood perhaps; but each alone:
Two wreſtlers help to pull each other down.

Not that my verſe wou'd blemiſh all the fair;
But yet, if ſome be bad, 'tis wiſdom to beware;
And better ſhun the bait, than ſtruggle in the ſnare.

Thus have you ſhunn'd, and ſhun the married ſtate,
Truſting as little as you can to fate.
No porter guards the paſſage of your door;
T' admit the wealthy, and exclude the poor:
For God, who gave the riches, gave the heart
To ſanctify the whole, by giving part:
Heav'n, who foreſaw the will, the means has wrought,
And to the ſecond ſon, a bleſſing brought:
The firſt-begotten had his father's ſhare;
But you, like Jacob, are Rebecca's heir.

So may your stores, and fruitful fields increase;
And ever be you bless'd, who live to bless.
As Ceres sow'd, where e'er her chariot flew;
As Heav'n in desarts rain'd the bread of dew,
So free to many, to relations most,
You feed with manna your own Israel-host.
With crowds attended of your ancient race,
You seek the champion-sports, or sylvan-chace:
With well-breath'd beagles, you surround the wood;
Ev'n then, industrious of the common good:
And often have you brought the wily fox
To suffer for the firstlings of the flocks;
Chas'd ev'n amid the folds; and made to bleed,
Like felons, where they did the murd'rous deed.
This fiery game your active youth maintain'd;
Not yet by years extinguish'd, though restrain'd:
You season still with sports your serious hours;
For age but tastes of pleasures, youth devours.
The hare, in pastures or in plains is found,
Emblem of human life, who runs the round;
And, after all his wand'ring ways are done,
His circle fills, and ends where he begun,
Just as the setting meets the rising sun.
Thus princes ease their cares; but happier he,
Who seeks not pleasure thro' necessity,
Than such as once on slipp'ry thrones were plac'd;
And chasing, sigh to think themselves are chas'd.
So liv'd our sires, e'er doctors learn'd to kill,
And multiply'd, with theirs, the weekly bill:
The first physicians by debauch were made:
Excess began, and sloth sustains the trade.

Pity the gen'rous kind their cares beſtow
To ſearch forbidden truths; (a ſin to know;)
To which, if human ſcience cou'd attain,
The doom of death, pronounc'd by God, were vain.
In vain the leech wou'd interpoſe delay;
Fate faſtens firſt, and vindicates the prey.
What help from art's endeavours can we have!
Guibbons but gueſſes, nor is ſure to ſave:
But Maurus ſweeps whole pariſhes, and peoples ev'ry grave.
And no more mercy to mankind will uſe,
Than when he robb'd and murder'd Maro's Muſe.
Wou'dſt thou be ſoon diſpatch'd, and periſh whole?
Truſt Maurus with thy life, and M-lb-rn with thy ſoul.

By chace our long-liv'd fathers earn'd their food;
Toil ſtrung the nerves, and purify'd the blood:
But we, their ſons, a pamper'd race of men,
Are dwindl'd down to threeſcore years and ten.
Better to hunt in fields, for health unbought,
Than fee the doctor for a nauſeous draught.
The wiſe, for cure, on exerciſe depend;
God never made his work for man to mend.

The tree of knowledge, once in Eden plac'd,
Was eaſy found, but was forbid the taſte:
O, had our grandſire walk'd without his wife,
He firſt had ſought the better plant of life!
Now, both are loſt; yet, wandring in the dark,
Phyſicians, for the tree, have found the bark.
They, lab'ring for relief of human kind,
With ſharpen'd ſight ſome remedies may find;
Th' apothecary-train is wholly blind.

From files a random recipe they take,
And many deaths of one prescription make.
Garth, gen'rous as his Muse, prescribes and gives;
The shop-man sells; and by destruction lives:
Ungrateful tribe! who, like the viper's brood,
From med'cine issuing, suck their mother's blood!
Let these obey; and let the learn'd prescribe;
That men may die, without a double bribe:
Let them, but under their superiors kill;
When doctors first have sign'd the bloody bill:
He scapes the best, who nature to repair,
Draws physic from the fields, in draughts of vital air.

You hoard not health for your own private use;
But on the public spend the rich produce.
When, often urg'd, unwilling to be great,
Your country calls you from your lov'd retreat,
And sends to senates, charg'd with common care
Which none more shuns; and none can better bear.
Where cou'd they find another form'd so fit,
To poise, with solid sense, a sprightly wit?
Were these both wanting, (as they both abound)
Where cou'd so firm integrity be found?

Well-born, and wealthy; wanting no support,
You steer betwixt the country and the court;
Nor gratify whate'er the great desire,
Nor grudging give, what public needs require.
Part must be left, a fund when foes invade;
And part employ'd to roll the wat'ry trade;
Ev'n Canaan's happy land, when worn with toil,
Requir'd a sabbath-year, to mend the meagre soil.

Good senators, (and such are you,) so give,
That kings may be supply'd, the people thrive.

And he, when want requires, is truly wiſe,
Who ſlights not foreign aids, nor over-buys ;
But, on our native ſtrength, in time of need, relies.
Munſter was bought, we boaſt not the ſucceſs ;
Who fights for gain, for greater, makes his peace.
Our foes, compell'd by need, have peace embrac'd :
The peace both parties want, is like to laſt :
Which, if ſecure, ſecurely we may trade ;
Or, not ſecure, ſhou'd never have been made.
Safe in ourſelves, while on ourſelves we ſtand ;
The ſea is ours, and that defends the land.
Be, then, the naval ſtores the nations care,
New ſhips to build, and batter'd to repair.
Obſerve the war, in ev'ry annual courſe ;
What has been done, was done with Britiſh force :
Namur ſubdu'd, is England's palm alone ;
The reſt beſieg'd ; but we conſtrain'd the town.
We ſaw th' event that follow'd our ſucceſs ;
France, though pretending arms, purſu'd the peace ;
Oblig'd, by one ſole treaty, to reſtore
What twenty years of war had won before.
Enough for Europe has our Albion fought ;
Let us enjoy the peace our blood has bought.
When once the Perſian King was put to flight,
The weary Macedons refus'd to fight ;
Themſelves their own mortality confeſs'd ;
And left the ſon of Jove to quarrel for the reſt.
Ev'n victors are by victories undone ;
Thus Hannibal, with foreign laurels won,
To Carthage was recall'd, too late, to keep his own.
While ſore of battle, while our wounds are green,
Why ſhou'd we tempt the doubtful dye again ?

In wars renew'd, uncertain of success,
Sure of a share, as umpires of the peace.
A patriot, both the king and country serves;
Prerogative, and privilege preserves:
Of each our laws the certain limit show;
One must not ebb, nor t' other overflow:
Betwixt the prince and parliament we stand;
The barriers of the state on either hand:
May neither overflow; for then they drown the land.
When both are full, they feed our bless'd abode;
Like those that water'd once the Paradise of God.
Some overpoise of sway, by turns they share;
In peace, the people, and the prince, in war:
Consuls of mod'rate pow'r in calms were made;
When the Gauls came, one sole dictator sway'd.
Patriots, in peace, assert the peoples right,
With noble stubbornness resisting might:
No lawless mandates from the court receive;
Nor lend by force; but in a body give.
Such was your gen'rous grandsire; free to grant
In parliaments, that weigh'd their prince's want:
But so tenacious of the common cause,
As not to lend the king against his laws.
And, in a lothsome dungeon doom'd to lie,
In bonds retain'd his birthright liberty,
And sham'd oppression, till it set him free.
O true descendent of a patriot line,
Who, while thou shar'st their lustre, lend'st 'em thine!
Vouchsafe this picture of thy soul to see;
'Tis so far good, as it resembles thee:
The beauties to th' original I owe;
Which, when I miss, my own defects I show.

Nor think the kindred Muſes thy diſgrace;
A poet is not born in ev'ry race:
Two of a houſe, few ages can afford;
One to perform, another to record.
Praiſe-worthy actions are by thee embrac'd;
And 'tis my praiſe, to make thy praiſes laſt.
For ev'n when death diſſolves our human frame,
The ſoul returns to Heav'n, from whence it came:
Earth keeps the body, verſe preſerves the fame.

MELEAGER

AND

ATALANTA,

Out of the EIGHTH BOOK of OVID's

METAMORPHOSES.

CONNECTION to the former STORY.

OVID, having told how Theseus had freed Athens from the tribute of children, (which was imposed on them by Minos King of Creta), by killing the Minotaur, here makes a digression to the story of Meleager and Atalanta, which is one of the most inartificial connections in all the Metamorphoses: For he only says, that Theseus obtained such honour from that combat, that all Greece had recourse to him in their necessities; and, amongst others, Calydon, though the heroe of that country, Prince Meleager, was then living.

FROM him the Calydonians sought relief;
Tho' valiant Meleagros was their chief.
The cause a boar, who ravag'd far and near;
Of Cynthia's wrath th' avenging minister.

For Oeneus with autumnal plenty bleſs'd,
By gifts to heav'n his gratitude expreſs'd:
Cull'd ſheafs, to Ceres; to Lyaeus, wine;
To Pan and Pales offer'd ſheep and kine;
And fat of olives to Minerva's ſhrine.
Beginning from the rural gods, his hand
Was lib'ral to the pow'rs of high command:
Each deity in ev'ry kind was bleſs'd,
Till at Diana's fane th' invidious honour ceas'd.
Wrath touches ev'n the gods; the Queen of night,
Fir'd with diſdain, and jealous of her right,
Unhonour'd though I am, at leaſt, ſaid ſhe,
Not unreveng'd that impious act ſhall be.
Swift as the word, ſhe ſped the boar away,
With charge on thoſe devoted fields to prey.
No larger bulls th' Egyptian paſtures feed,
And none ſo large Sicilian meadows breed:
His eye-balls glare with fire ſuffus'd with blood;
His neck ſhoots up a thick-ſet thorny wood;
His briſtled back a trench impal'd appears,
And ſtands erected, like a field of ſpears.
Froth fills his chaps, he ſends a grunting ſound,
And part he churns, and part beſoams the ground.
For tuſks with Indian elephants he ſtrove,
And Jove's own thunder from his mouth he drove.
He burns the leaves; the ſcorching blaſt invades
The tender corn, and ſhrivels up the blades:
Or, ſuff'ring not their yellow beards to rear,
He tramples down the ſpikes, and intercepts the year.
In vain the barns expect their promis'd load,
Nor barns at home, nor reeks are heap'd abroad:

In vain the hinds the threſhing-floor prepare,
And exerciſe their flails in empty air.
With olives ever-green the ground is ſtrow'd,
And grapes ungather'd ſhed their gen'rous blood.
Amid the fold he rages, nor the ſheep
Their ſhepherds, nor the grooms their bulls can keep.
From fields to walls the frighted rabble run,
Nor think themſelves ſecure within the town;
Till Meleagros, and his choſen crew,
Contemn the danger, and the praiſe purſue.
Fair Leda's twins (in time to ſtars decreed)
One fought on foot, one curb'd the fiery ſteed;
Then iſſu'd forth fam'd Jaſon after theſe,
Who mann'd the foremoſt ſhip that ſail'd the ſeas;
Then Theſeus join'd with bold Perithous came;
A ſingle concord in a double name:
The Theſtian ſons, Idas who ſwiftly ran,
And Ceneus, once a woman, now a man:
Lynceus, with eagles eyes, and lions heart;
Leucippus, with his never-erring dart;
Acaſtus, Phileus, Phoenix, Telamon,
Echion, Lelex, and Eurytion,
Achilles Father, and great Phocus' ſon;
Dryas the fierce, and Hippaſus the ſtrong;
With twice old Iolas, and Neſtor then but young:
Laertes active, and Ancaeus bold;
Mopſus the ſage, who future things foretold;
And t' other ſeer, yet by his wife * unfold.
A thouſand others of immortal fame;
Among the reſt, fair Atalanta came;

* *Amphiaraus.*

Grace of the woods! a diamond buckle bound
Her veſt behind, that elſe had flow'd upon the ground,
And ſhew'd her buſkin'd legs; her head was bare,
But for her native ornament of hair;
Which in a ſimple knot was ty'd above,
Sweet negligence! unheeded bait of love!
Her ſounding quiver, on her ſhoulder ty'd,
One hand a dart, and one a bow ſupply'd.
Such was her face, as in a nymph diſplay'd
A fair fierce boy, or in a boy betray'd
The bluſhing beauties of a modeſt maid.
The Calydonian chief at once the dame
Beheld, at once his heart receiv'd the flame,
With heav'ns averſe. O happy youth, he cry'd,
For whom thy fates reſerve ſo fair a bride!
He ſigh'd, and had no leiſure more to ſay;
His honour call'd his eyes another way,
And forc'd him to purſue the now neglected prey.

There ſtood a foreſt on a mountain's brow,
Which over-look'd the ſhaded plains below;
No ſounding ax preſum'd thoſe trees to bite;
Coeval with the world, a venerable ſight.
The heroes there arriv'd, ſome ſpread around
The toils; ſome ſearch the footſteps on the ground;
Some from the chains the faithful dogs unbound.
Of action eager, and intent in thought,
The chiefs their honourable danger ſought.
A valley ſtood below, the common drain
Of waters from above, and falling rain:
The bottom was a moiſt and marſhy ground,
Whoſe edges were with bending oſiers crown'd.

The knotty bulruſh next in order ſtood,
And all within of reeds a trembling wood.
From hence the boar was rous'd, and ſprung amain
Like lightning ſudden, on the warrior train;
Beats down the trees before him, ſhakes the ground,
The foreſt echoes to the crackling ſound;
Shout the fierce youth, and clamours ring around.
All ſtood with their protended ſpears prepar'd,
With broad ſteel heads the brandiſh'd weapons glar'd.
The beaſt, impetuous, with his tuſks aſide,
Deals glancing wounds; the fearful dogs divide:
All ſpend their mouth aloof, but none abide.
Echion threw the firſt, but miſs'd his mark,
And ſtuck his boar-ſpear on maple's bark.
Then Jaſon: And his javelin ſeem'd to take,
But fail'd with over force, and whiz'd above his back.
Mopſus was next; but e'er he threw, addreſs'd
To Phoebus, thus: O Patron, help thy prieſt:
If I adore, and ever have ador'd,
Thy pow'r divine, thy preſent aid afford;
That I may reach the beaſt. The god allow'd
His pray'r, and ſmiling, gave him what he cou'd.
He reach'd the ſavage, but no blood he drew,
Dian unarm'd the javelin as it flew.
This chaf'd the boar, his noſtrils flames expire,
And his red eye-balls roll with living fire.
Whirl'd from a ſling, or from an engine thrown,
Amidſt the foes ſo flies a mighty ſtone,
As flew the beaſt: The left wing put to flight,
The chiefs o'erborn, he ruſhes on the right.
Empalamos and Pelagon he laid
In duſt, and next to death, but for their fellows aid.

Oneſimus far'd worſe, prepar'd to fly,
The fatal fang drove deep within his thigh,
And cut the nerves; the nerves no more ſuſtain
The bulk; the bulk unprop'd, falls headlong on the plain.
Neſtor had fail'd the fall of Troy to ſee,
But leaning on his lance, he vaulted on a tree;
Then gath'ring up his feet, look'd down with fear,
And thought his monſtrous foe was ſtill too near.
Againſt a ſtump his tuſk the monſter grinds,
And in the ſharpen'd edge new vigour finds;
Then truſting to his arms, young Othrys found,
And ranch'd his hips with one continu'd wound.
Now Leda's twins, the future ſtars, appear;
White were their habits, white their horſes were:
Conſpicuous both, and both in act to throw
Their trembling lances brandiſh'd at the foe:
Nor had they miſs'd; but he to thickets fled,
Conceal'd from aiming ſpears, not pervious to the ſteed.
But Telamon ruſh'd in, and happ'd to meet
A riſing root, that held his faſtned feet;
So down he fell; whom, ſprawling on the ground,
His brother from the wooden gyves unbound.
Mean time the virgin-huntreſs was not ſlow
T' expel the ſhaft from her contracted bow:
Beneath his ear the faſtned arrow ſtood,
And from the wound appear'd the trickling blood.
She bluſh'd for joy; but Meleagros rais'd
His voice with loud applauſe, and the fair archer prais'd.
He was the firſt to ſee, and firſt to ſhow
His friends the marks of the ſucceſsful blow.
Nor ſhall thy valour want the praiſes due.
He ſaid; a virtuous envy ſeiz'd the crew.

They ſhout; the ſhouting animates their hearts;
And all at once employ their thronging darts:
But out of order thrown, in air they join;
And multitude makes fruſtrate the deſign.
With both his hands the proud Ancaeus takes,
And flouriſhes his double-biting ax;
Then forward to his fate he took a ſtride
Before the reſt, and to his fellows cry'd:
Give place, and mark the diff'rence, if you can,
Between a woman warrior and a man;
The boar is doom'd; nor though Diana lend
Her aid, Diana can her beaſt defend.
Thus boaſted he; then ſtretch'd, on tiptoe ſtood,
Secure to make his empty promiſe good.
But the more wary beaſt prevents the blow,
And upward rips the groin of his audacious foe.
Ancaeus falls; his bowels from the wound
Ruſh out, and clotter'd blood diſtains the ground.
Perithous, no ſmall portion of the war
Preſs'd on, and ſhook his lance; to whom, from far,
Thus Theſeus cry'd; O ſtay, my better part!
My more than miſtreſs! of my heart, the heart!
The ſtrong may fight aloof; Ancaeus try'd
His force too near, and by preſuming dy'd:
He ſaid, and while he ſpake his javelin threw,
Hiſſing in air th' unerring weapon flew;
But on an arm of oak, that ſtood betwixt
The markſman and the mark, his lance he fix'd.
Once more bold Jaſon threw, but fail'd to wound
The boar, and ſlew an undeſerving hound;
And through the dog the dart was nail'd to ground.

Two ſpears from Meleager's hand were ſent,
With equal force, but various in th' event:
The firſt was fix'd in earth, the ſecond ſtood
On the boar's briſtled back, and deeply drank his blood.
Now while the tortur'd ſavage turns around,
And flings about his foam, impatient of the wound,
The wound's great author cloſe at hand provokes
His rage, and plies him with redoubl'd ſtrokes;
Wheels as he wheels; and with his pointed dart
Explores the neareſt paſſage to his heart.
Quick, and more quick he ſpins in giddy gyres,
Then falls, and in much foam his ſoul expires.
This act with ſhouts, heav'n high, the friendly band
Applaud, and ſtrain in theirs the victor-hand.
Then all approach the ſlain with vaſt ſurprize,
Admire on what a breadth of earth he lies,
And ſcare ſecure, reach out their ſpears afar, [war.
And blood their points, to prove their partnerſhip of
But he, the conqu'ring chief, his foot impreſs'd
On the ſtrong neck of that deſtructive beaſt;
And gazing on the nymph with ardent eyes,
Accept, ſaid he, fair Nonacrine, my prize,
And, though inferior, ſuffer me to join
My labours, and my part of praiſe with thine:
At this preſents her with the tuſky head
And chine, with riſing briſtles roughly ſpread.
Glad, ſhe receiv'd the gift; and ſeem'd to take
With double pleaſure, for the giver's ſake.
The reſt were ſeiz'd with ſullen diſcontent,
And a deaf murmur through the ſquadron went.
All envy'd; but the Theſtian brethren ſhow'd
The leaſt reſpect, and thus they vent their ſpleen aloud.

Lay down thoſe honour'd ſpoils, nor think to ſhare,
Weak woman, as thou art, the prize of war;
Ours is the title, thine a foreign claim,
Since Meleagros from our lineage came.
Truſt not thy beauty; but reſtore the prize,
Which he, beſotted on that face and eyes,
Would rend from us. At this, inflam'd with ſpite,
From her they ſnatch the gift, from him the giver's right.
But ſoon th' impatient prince his faulchion drew,
And cry'd, Ye robbers of another's due,
Now learn the diff'rence, at your proper coſt,
Betwixt true valour and an empty boaſt.
At this advanc'd, and ſudden as the word,
In proud Ploxippus' boſom plung'd the ſword:
Toxeus amaz'd, and with amazement ſlow,
Or to revenge, or ward the coming blow,
Stood doubting; and while doubting thus he ſtood,
Receiv'd the ſteel bath'd in his brother's blood.
Pleas'd with the firſt, unknown the ſecond news,
Althea to the temples pays their dues,
For her ſon's conqueſt; when at length appear
Her grieſly brethren ſtretch'd upon the bier:
Pale at the ſudden ſight, ſhe chang'd her cheer,
And with her cheer her robes; but hearing tell
The cauſe, the manner, and by whom they fell,
'Twas grief no more, or grief and rage were one
Within her ſoul; at laſt 'twas rage alone;
Which burning upwards in ſucceſſion dries
The tears that ſtood conſid'ring in her eyes.
There lay a log unlighted on the hearth:
When ſhe was lab'ring in the throws of birth

For th'unborn chief; the fatal ſiſters came,
And rais'd it up, and toſs'd it on the flame:
Then on the rock a ſcanty meaſure place
Of vital flax, and turn'd the wheel apace;
And turning ſung, to this red brand and thee,
O new-born babe, we give an equal deſtiny:
So vaniſh'd out of view. The frighted dame
Sprung haſty from her bed, and quench'd the flame:
The log, in ſecret lock'd, ſhe kept with care,
And that, while thus preſerv'd, preſerv'd her heir.
This brand ſhe now produc'd; and firſt ſhe ſtrows
The hearth with heaps of chips, and after blows;
Thrice heav'd her hand, and heav'd, ſhe thrice re-
preſs'd:
The ſiſter and the mother long conteſt
Two doubtful titles in one tender breaſt:
And now her eyes and cheeks with fury glow;
Now pale her cheeks, her eyes with pity flow;
Now lowring looks preſage approaching ſtorms;
And now prevailing love her face reforms:
Reſolv'd, ſhe doubts again; the tears ſhe dry'd
With burning rage, are by new tears ſupply'd:
And as a ſhip, which winds and waves aſſail,
Now with the current drives, now with the gale,
Both oppoſite, and neither long prevail;
She feels a double force, by turns obeys
Th'imperious tempeſt, and th'impetuous ſeas:
So fares Althea's mind; ſhe firſt relents
With pity, of that pity then repents:
Siſter and mother long the ſcales divide,
But the beam nodded on the ſiſter's ſide.

Sometimes she softly sigh'd, then roar'd aloud;
But sighs were stifl'd in the cries of blood.
The pious, impious wretch at length decreed,
To please her brother's ghost, her son shou'd bleed:
And when the fun'ral flames began to rise,
Receive, she said, a sister's sacrifice;
A mother's bowels burn: High in her hand,
Thus while she spoke, she held the fatal brand;
Then thrice before the kindled pile she bow'd,
And the three Furies thrice invok'd aloud.
Come, come, revenging sisters, come and view
A sister paying her dead brother's due.
A crime I punish, and a crime commit;
But blood for blood, and death for death is fit:
Great crimes must be with greater crimes repaid,
And second funerals on the former laid.
Let the whole houshold in one ruin fall,
And may Diana's curse o'ertake us all.
Shall Fate to happy Oeneus still allow
One son, while Thestius stands depriv'd of two?
Better three lost, than one unpunish'd go.
Take then, dear ghosts, (while yet admitted new
In hell you wait my duty), take your due;
A costly off'ring on your tomb is laid,
When with my blood the price of yours is paid.
Ah! whether am I hurry'd? ah! forgive,
Ye shades, and let your sister's issue live:
A mother cannot give him death, though he
Deserves it, he deserves it not from me.
Then shall th' unpunish'd wretch insult the slain,
Triumphant live, nor only live, but reign?

While you, thin ſhades, the ſport of winds, are toſs'd
O'er dreary plains, or tread the burning coaſt.
I cannot, cannot bear; 'tis paſt, 'tis done;
Periſh this impious, this deteſted ſon:
Periſh his ſire, and periſh I withal;
And let the houſe's heir, and the hop'd kingdom fall.
Where is the mother fled, her pious love,
And where the pains with which ten months I ſtrove!
Ah! hadſt thou dy'd, my ſon, in infant years,
Thy little hearſe had been bedew'd with tears.
Thou liv'ſt by me; to me thy breath reſign;
Mine is the merit, the demerit thine.
Thy life by double title I require;
Once giv'n at birth, and once preſerv'd from fire:
One murder pay, or add one murder more,
And me to them who fell by thee reſtore.
I wou'd, but cannot; my ſon's image ſtands
Before my ſight; and now their angry hands
My brothers hold, and vengeance theſe exact;
This pleads compaſſion, and repents the fact.
He pleads in vain, and I pronounce his doom:
My brothers, though unjuſtly, ſhall o'ercome.
But having paid their injur'd ghoſts their due,
My ſon requires my death, and mine ſhall his purſue.
At this, for the laſt time, ſhe lifts her hand,
Averts her eyes, and, half unwilling, drops the brand.
The brand, amid the flaming fewel thrown,
Or drew, or ſeem'd to draw, a dying groan:
The fires themſelves but faintly lick'd their prey,
Then loath'd their impious food, and wou'd have ſhrunk away.

Juſt then the heroe caſt a doleful cry,
And in thoſe abſent flames began to fry:
The blind contagion rag'd within his veins;
But he with manly patience bore his pains.
He fear'd not Fate, but only griev'd to die
Without an honeſt wound, and by a death ſo dry.
Happy Ancaeus, thrice aloud he cry'd,
With what becoming fate in arms he dy'd!
Then call'd his brothers, ſiſters, ſire, around,
And her to whom his nuptial vows were bound;
Perhaps his mother: A long ſigh he drew,
And his voice failing, took his laſt adieu.
For as the flames augment, and as they ſtay
At their full height, then languiſh to decay,
They riſe and ſink by fits; at laſt they ſoar
In one bright blaze, and then deſcend no more.
Juſt ſo his inward heats at height, impair,
Till the laſt burning breath ſhoots out the ſoul in air.
Now lofty Calydon in ruins lies;
All ages, all degrees unſluice their eyes;
And heav'n and earth reſound with murmurs, groans, and cries.
Matrons and maidens beat their breaſts, and tear
Their habits, and root up their ſcatter'd hair.
The wretched father, father now no more,
With ſorrow ſunk, lies proſtrate on the floor,
Deforms his hoary locks with duſt obſcene,
And curſes age, and loaths a life prolong'd with pain.
By ſteel her ſtubborn ſoul his mother freed,
And puniſh'd on herſelf her impious deed.
Had I a hundred tongues, a wit ſo large
As cou'd their hundred offices diſcharge;

Had Phoebus all his Helicon beſtow'd
In all the ſtreams inſpiring all the god; [vain
Thoſe tongues, that wit, thoſe ſtreams, that god, in
Wou'd offer to deſcribe his ſiſters pain:
They beat their breaſts with many a bruiſing blow,
Till they turn'd livid, and corrupt the ſnow.
The corpſe they cheriſh, while the corpſe remains,
And exerciſe and rub with fruitleſs pains;
And when to fun'ral flames 'tis borne away,
They kiſs the bed on which the body lay;
And when thoſe fun'ral flames no longer burn,
(The duſt compos'd within a pious urn)
Ev'n in that urn their brother they confeſs,
And hug it in their arms, and to their boſoms preſs.

His tomb is rais'd; then, ſtretch'd along the ground,
Thoſe living monuments his tomb ſurround;
Ev'n to his name, inſcrib'd, their tears they pay,
Till tears and kiſſes wear his name away.

But Cynthia now had all her fury ſpent,
Not with leſs ruin than a race content;
Excepting Gorge, periſh'd all the ſeed,
And * her whom heav'n for Hercules decreed.
Satiate at laſt, no longer ſhe purſu'd
The weeping ſiſters; but with wings endu'd,
And horny beaks, and ſent to flit in air;
Who yearly round the tomb in feather'd flocks repair.

* Dejanira.

SIGISMONDA
AND
GUISCARDO.
FROM
BOCCACE.

WHILE Norman Tancred in Salerno reign'd,
The title of a gracious prince he gain'd;
Till turn'd a tyrant in his latter days,
He loſt the luſtre of his former praiſe;
And from the bright meridian where he ſtood,
Deſcending, dipp'd his hands in lovers blood.
This prince, of Fortune's favour long poſſeſs'd,
Yet was with one fair daughter only bleſs'd;
And bleſs'd he might have been with her alone;
But oh! how much more happy, had he none!
She was his care, his hope, and his delight,
Moſt in his thought, and ever in his ſight:
Next, nay beyond his life, he held her dear;
She liv'd by him, and now he liv'd in her.
For this, when ripe for marriage, he delay'd
Her nuptial bands, and kept her long a maid;
As envying any elſe ſhould ſhare a part
Of what was his, and claiming all her heart.
At length, as public decency requir'd,
And all his vaſſals eagerly deſir'd,

With mind averſe, he rather underwent
His peoples will, than gave his own conſent:
So was ſhe torn, as from a lover's ſide,
And made almoſt in his deſpite a bride.
Short were her marriage-joys; for in the prime
Of youth, her lord expir'd before his time:
And to her father's court, in little ſpace,
Reſtor'd anew, ſhe held a higher place;
More lov'd, and more exalted into grace.
This princeſs, freſh and young, and fair and wiſe,
The worſhipp'd idol of her father's eyes,
Did all her ſex in ev'ry grace exceed,
And had more wit beſide than women need.
Youth, health, and eaſe, and moſt an amorous mind,
To ſecond nuptials had her thoughts inclin'd;
And former joys had left a ſecret ſting behind.
But prodigal in ev'ry other grant,
Her ſire left unſupply'd her only want;
And ſhe, betwixt her modeſty and pride,
Her wiſhes, which ſhe could not help, would hide.
Reſolv'd at laſt to loſe no longer time,
And yet to pleaſe herſelf without a crime,
She caſt her eyes around the court, to find
A worthy ſubject ſuiting to her mind;
To him in holy nuptials to be ty'd,
A ſeeming widow, and a ſecret bride.
Among the train of courtiers, one ſhe found
With all the gifts of bounteous Nature crown'd,
Of gentle blood, but one whoſe niggard fate
Had ſet him far below her high eſtate;

Guiſcard his name was call'd; of blooming age,
Now ſquire to Tancred, and before his page:
To him, the choice of all the ſhining crowd,
Her heart the noble Sigiſmonda vow'd.
Yet hitherto ſhe kept her love conceal'd,
And with cloſe glances every day beheld
The graceful youth; and ev'ry day increas'd
The raging fire that burn'd within her breaſt;
Some ſecret charm did all his acts attend,
And what his fortune wanted hers could mend:
Till, as the fire will force its outward way,
Or, in the priſon pent, conſume the prey;
So long her earneſt eyes on his were ſet,
At length their twiſted rays together met;
And he, ſurpriz'd with humble joy, ſurvey'd
One ſweet regard ſhot by the royal maid:
Not well aſſur'd, while doubtful hopes he nurs'd,
A ſecond glance came gliding like the firſt;
And he who ſaw the ſharpneſs of the dart,
Without defence, receiv'd it in his heart.
In public though their paſſion wanted ſpeech,
Yet mutual looks interpreted for each:
Time, ways, and means of meeting were deny'd;
But all thoſe wants ingenious Love ſupply'd.
Th' inventive god, who never fails his part,
Inſpires the wit, when once he warms the heart.
When Guiſcard next was in the circle ſeen,
Where Sigiſmonda held the place of queen,
A hollow cane within her hand ſhe brought,
But in the concave had inclos'd a note;
With this ſhe ſeem'd to play, and, as in ſport,
Toſs'd to her love, in preſence of the court:

Take it, ſhe ſaid; and when your needs require,
This little brand will ſerve to light your fire.
He took it with a bow, and ſoon divin'd
The ſeeming toy was not for nought deſign'd:
But when retir'd, ſo long with curious eyes
He view'd the preſent, that he found the prize.
Much was in little writ; and all convey'd
With cautious care, for fear to be betray'd
By ſome falſe confident, or fav'rite maid.
The time, the place, the manner how to meet,
Were all in punctual order plainly writ.
But ſince a truſt muſt be, ſhe thought it beſt
To put it out of laymens pow'r at leaſt,
And for their ſolemn vows prepar'd a prieſt.
Guiſcard (her ſecret purpoſe underſtood)
With joy prepar'd to meet the coming good;
Nor pains nor danger was reſolv'd to ſpare,
But uſe the means appointed by the fair.
Near the proud palace of Salerno ſtood
A mount of rough aſcent, and thick with wood;
Through this a cave was dug with vaſt expence,
The work it ſeem'd of ſome ſuſpicious prince,
Who, when abuſing pow'r with lawleſs might,
From public juſtice would ſecure his flight.
The paſſage made by many a winding way,
Reach'd ev'n the room in which the tyrant lay.
Fit for his purpoſe, on a lower floor
He lodg'd, whoſe iſſue was an iron door,
From whence, by ſtairs deſcending to the ground,
In the blind grot a ſafe retreat he found.
Its outlet ended in a brake o'ergrown
With brambles, choak'd by time, and now unknown.

A rift there was, which from the mountain's height
Convey'd a glimm'ring and malignant light;
A breathing-place to draw the damps away;
A twilight of an intercepted day.
The tyrant's den, whoſe uſe, though loſt to fame,
Was now th' apartment of the royal dame,
The cavern only to her father known,
By him was to his darling daughter ſhown.
Neglected long ſhe let the ſecret reſt,
Till love recall'd it to her lab'ring breaſt,
And hinted as the way by heav'n deſign'd
The teacher, by the means he taught, to blind.
What will not women do, when need inſpires
Their wit, or love their inclination fires!
Though jealouſy of ſtate th' invention found,
Yet love refin'd upon the former ground.
That way, the tyrant had reſerv'd, to fly
Purſuing hate, now ſerv'd to bring two lovers nigh.
The dame, who long in vain had kept the key,
Bold by deſire, explor'd the ſecret way;
Now try'd the ſtairs, and wading through the night,
Search'd all the deep receſs, and iſſu'd into light.
All this her letter had ſo well explain'd,
Th' inſtructed youth might compaſs what remain'd:
The cavern-mouth alone was hard to find,
Becauſe the path diſus'd, was out of mind:
But in what quarter of the cops it lay,
His eye by certain level could ſurvey:
Yet (for the wood perplex'd with thorns he knew)
A frock of leather o'er his limbs he drew:
And thus provided, ſearch'd the brake around,
'Till the choak'd entry of the cave he found.

Thus, all prepar'd, the promis'd hour arriv'd,
So long expected, and ſo well contriv'd:
With love to friend, th' impatient lover went,
Fenc'd from the thorns, and trod the deep deſcent.
The conſcious prieſt, who was ſuborn'd before,
Stood ready poſted at the poſtern-door;
The maids in diſtant rooms were ſent to reſt,
And nothing wanted but th' invited gueſt.
He came, and knocking thrice, without delay,
The longing lady heard, and turn'd the key;
At once invaded him with all her charms,
And the firſt ſtep he made, was in her arms:
The leathern out-ſide, boiſtrous as it was,
Gave way, and bent beneath her ſtrict embrace:
On either ſide the kiſſes flew ſo thick,
That neither he nor ſhe had breath to ſpeak.
The holy man amaz'd at what he ſaw,
Made haſte to ſanctify the bliſs by law;
And mutter'd faſt the matrimony o'er,
For fear committed ſin ſhould get before.
His work perform'd, he left the pair alone,
Becauſe he knew he could not go too ſoon;
His preſence odious, when his taſk was done.
What thoughts he had, beſeems not me to ſay;
Though ſome ſurmiſe he went to faſt and pray,
And needed both, to drive the tempting thoughts away.
The foe once gone, they took their full delight;
'Twas reſtleſs rage, and tempeſt all the night:
For greedy Love each moment would employ,
And grudg'd the ſhorteſt pauſes of their joy.

Thus were their loves auſpiciouſly begun,
And thus with ſecret care were carried on.
The ſtealth itſelf did appetite reſtore,
And look'd ſo like a ſin, it pleas'd the more.
The cave was now become a common way,
The wicket, often open'd, knew the key:
Love rioted ſecure, and long enjoy'd,
Was ever eager, and was never cloy'd.
But as extremes are ſhort of ill and good;
And tides at higheſt mark regorge the flood:
So Fate, that could no more improve their joy,
Took a malicious pleaſure to deſtroy.
Tancred, who fondly lov'd, and whoſe delight
Was plac'd in his fair daughter's daily ſight,
Of cuſtom, when his ſtate-affairs were done,
Would paſs his pleaſing hours with her alone;
And, as a father's privilege allow'd,
Without attendance of th' officious crowd.
It happen'd once, that, when in heat of day,
He try'd to ſleep, as was his uſual way;
The balmy ſlumber fled his wakeful eyes,
And forc'd him, in his own deſpite, to riſe:
Of ſleep forſaken, to relieve his care,
He ſought the converſation of the fair;
But with her train of damſels ſhe was gone,
In ſhady walks the ſcorching heat to ſhun;
He would not violate that ſweet receſs,
And found beſides a welcome heavineſs
That ſeiz'd his eyes; and ſlumber, which forgot,
When call'd before to come, now came unſought.
From light retir'd, behind his daughter's bed,
He for approaching ſleep compos'd his head:

A chair was ready, for that uſe deſign'd,
So quilted, that he lay at eaſe reclin'd;
The curtains cloſely drawn, the light to ſcreen,
As if he had contriv'd to lie unſeen.
Thus cover'd with an artificial night,
Sleep did his office ſoon, and ſeal'd his ſight.
With heaven averſe, in this ill-omen'd hour,
Was Guiſcard ſummon'd to the ſecret bow'r;
And the fair nymph, with expectation fir'd,
From her attending damſels was retir'd:
For, true to love, ſhe meaſur'd time ſo right,
As not to miſs one moment of delight.
The garden, ſeated on the level floor,
She left behind, and locking ev'ry door,
Thought all ſecure; but little did ſhe know,
Blind to her fate, ſhe had inclos'd her foe.
Attending Guiſcard, in his leathern frock,
Stood ready, with his thrice-repeated knock:
Thrice with a doleful ſound the jarring grate
Rung deaf, and hollow, and preſag'd their fate.
The door unlock'd, to known delight they haſte,
And panting in each others arms, embrac'd;
Ruſh to the conſcious bed, a mutual freight,
And heedleſs preſs it with their wonted weight.
The ſudden bound awak'd the ſleeping ſire,
And ſhew'd a ſight no parent can deſire;
His opening eyes at once with odious view
The love diſcover'd, and the lover knew:
He would have cry'd; but hoping that he dreamt,
Amazement ty'd his tongue, and ſtopp'd th' attempt.
Th' enſuing moment all the truth declar'd,
But now he ſtood collected, and prepar'd;
For malice and revenge had put him on his guard.

So, like a lion that unheaded lay,
Diſſembling ſleep, and watchful to betray,
With inward rage he meditates his prey.
The thoughtleſs pair, indulging their deſires,
Alternate kindl'd, and then quench'd their fires;
Nor thinking in the ſhades of death they play'd,
Full of themſelves, themſelves alone ſurvey'd,
And, too ſecure, were by themſelves betray'd.
Long time diſſolv'd in pleaſure thus they lay,
Till nature could no more ſuffice their play;
Then roſe the youth, and through the cave again
Return'd; the princeſs mingl'd with her train.

Reſolv'd his unripe vengeance to defer,
The royal ſpy, when now the coaſt was clear,
Sought not the garden, but retir'd unſeen,
To brood in ſecret on his gather'd ſpleen,
And methodize revenge: To death he griev'd;
And, but he ſaw the crime, had ſcarce believ'd.
Th' appointment for th' enſuing night he heard;
And therefore in the cavern had prepar'd
Two brawny yeomen of his truſty guard.

Scarce had unwary Guiſcard ſet his foot
Within the farmoſt entrance of the grot,
When theſe in ſecret ambuſh ready lay,
And, ruſhing on the ſudden, ſeiz'd the prey.
Encumber'd with his frock, without defence,
An eaſy prize, they led the pris'ner thence,
And, as commanded, brought before the prince.
The gloomy ſire, too ſenſible of wrong
To vent his rage in words, reſtrain'd his tongue;
And only ſaid: Thus ſervants are preferr'd,
And truſted, thus their ſov'reigns they reward.

Had I not ſeen, had not theſe eyes receiv'd
Too clear a proof, I could not have believ'd.
He paus'd, and choak'd the reſt. The youth, who ſaw
His forfeit life abandon'd to the law,
The judge th' accuſer, and th' offence to him
Who had both pow'r and will t' avenge the crime;
No vain defence prepar'd; but thus reply'd,
The faults of love by love are juſtify'd:
With unreſiſted might the monarch reigns,
He levels mountains, and he raiſes plains;
And not regarding diff'rence of degree,
Abas'd your daughter, and exalted me.
This bold return with ſeeming patience heard,
The pris'ner was remitted to the guard.
The ſullen tyrant ſlept not all the night,
But lonely walking by a winking light,
Sobb'd, wept, and groan'd, and beat his wither'd breaſt,
But would not violate his daughter's reſt;
Who long expecting lay, for bliſs prepar'd,
Liſtning for noiſe, and griev'd that none ſhe heard;
Oft roſe, and oft in vain employ'd the key,
And oft accus'd her lover of delay; [away.
And paſs'd the tedious hours in anxious thoughts
The morrow came; and at his uſual hour
Old Tancred viſited his daughter's bow'r;
Her cheek (for ſuch his cuſtom was) he kiſs'd,
Then bleſs'd her kneeling, and her maids diſmiſs'd.
The royal dignity thus far maintain'd,
Now left in private, he no longer feign'd;
But all at once his grief and rage appear'd,
And floods of tears ran trickling down his beard.

O Sigiſmonda, he began to ſay:
Thrice he began, and thrice was forc'd to ſtay,
Till words with often trying found their way:
I thought, O Sigiſmonda, (but how blind
Are parents eyes, their childrens faults to find!)
Thy virtue, birth, and breeding were above
A mean deſire, and vulgar ſenſe of love:
Nor leſs than ſight and hearing could convince
So fond a father, and ſo juſt a prince,
Of ſuch an unforeſeen, and unbeliev'd offence.
Then what indignant ſorrow muſt I have,
To ſee thee lie ſubjected to my ſlave!
A man ſo ſmelling of the peoples lee,
The court receiv'd him firſt for charity;
And ſince with no degree of honour grac'd,
But only ſuffer'd where he firſt was plac'd;
A grov'ling inſect ſtill; and ſo deſign'd
By Nature's hand, nor born of noble kind;
A thing, by neither man nor woman priz'd,
And ſcarcely known enough, to be deſpis'd.
To what has heav'n reſerv'd my age? ah! why
Should man, when Nature calls, not chuſe to die,
Rather than ſtretch the ſpan of life, to find
Such ills as Fate has wiſely caſt behind,
For thoſe to feel whom fond deſire to live
Makes covetous of more than life can give!
Each has his ſhare of good; and when 'tis gone,
The gueſt, though hungry, cannot riſe too ſoon.
But I, expecting more, in my own wrong
Protracting life, have liv'd a day too long.
If yeſterday could be recall'd again,
Ev'n now would I conclude my happy reign.

But 'tis too late, my glorious race is run,
And a dark cloud o'ertakes my ſetting ſun;
Hadſt thou not lov'd, or loving ſav'd the ſhame;
If not the ſin, by ſome illuſtrious name,
This little comfort had reliev'd my mind,
'Twas frailty, not unuſual to thy kind:
But thy low fall beneath thy royal blood,
Shews downward appetite to mix with mud.
Thus not the leaſt excuſe is left for thee,
Nor the leaſt refuge for unhappy me.
For him I have reſolv'd:---Whom by ſurpriſe
I took, and ſcarce can call it, in diſguiſe:
For ſuch was his attire, as with intent
Of nature, ſuited to his mean deſcent.
The harder queſtion yet remains behind,
What pains a parent and a prince can find
To puniſh an offence of this degenerate kind.
As I have lov'd, and yet I love thee more
Than ever father lov'd a child before;
So that indulgence draws me to forgive:
Nature, that gave thee life, would have thee live.
But, as a public parent of the ſtate,
My juſtice, and thy crime, requires thy fate.
Fain would I chuſe a middle courſe to ſteer;
Nature's too kind, and juſtice too ſevere:
Speak for us both, and to the balance bring
On either ſide, the father, and the king.
Heav'n knows, my heart is bent to favour thee;
Make it but ſcanty weight, and leave the reſt to me.
Here ſtopping with a ſigh, he pour'd a flood
Of tears, to make his laſt expreſſion good.

She, who had heard him ſpeak, nor ſaw alone
The ſecret conduct of her love was known;
But he was taken who her ſoul poſſeſt,
Felt all the pangs of ſorrow in her breaſt:
And little wanted, but a woman's heart
With cries, and tears, had teſtify'd her ſmart.
But in-born worth, that fortune can controul,
New ſtrung, and ſtiffer bent her ſofter ſoul;
The heroine aſſum'd the woman's place,
Confirm'd her mind, and fortify'd her face.
Why ſhould ſhe beg, or what could ſhe pretend,
When her ſtern father had condemn'd her friend?
Her life ſhe might have had; but her deſpair
Of ſaving his, had put it paſt her care.
Reſolv'd on fate, ſhe would not loſe her breath,
But rather than not die, ſollicit death.
Fix'd on this thought, ſhe not as women uſe,
Her fault by common frailty would excuſe;
But boldly juſtify'd her innocence,
And while the fact was own'd, deny'd the offence.
Then with dry eyes, and with an open look,
She met his glance mid-way, and thus undaunted ſpoke.

Tancred, I neither am diſpos'd to make
Requeſt for life, nor offer'd life to take;
Much leſs deny the deed; but leaſt of all
Beneath pretended juſtice weakly fall.
My words to ſacred truth ſhall be confin'd,
My deeds ſhall ſhew the greatneſs of my mind.
That I have lov'd, I own; that ſtill I love,
I call to witneſs all the pow'rs above.
Yet more I own; to Guiſcard's love I give
The ſmall remaining time I have to live;

And if beyond this life desire can be,
Not Fate itself shall set my passion free.
This first avow'd; nor folly warp'd my mind,
Nor the frail texture of the female kind
Betray'd my virtue; for too well I knew
What honour was, and honour had his due:
Before the holy priest my vows were ty'd;
So came I not a strumpet, but a bride.
This for my fame, and for the public voice:
Yet more; his merits justify'd my choice;
Which had they not, the first election thine,
That bond dissolv'd, the next is freely mine.
Or grant I err'd, (which yet I must deny,)
Had parents pow'r ev'n second vows to tie,
Thy little care to mend my widow'd nights
Has forc'd me to recourse of marriage-rites,
To fill an empty side, and follow known delights.
What have I done in this deserving blame?
State-laws may alter; Nature's are the same:
Those are usurp'd on helpless womankind,
Made without our consent, and wanting pow'r to bind.
Thou, Tancred, better should'st have understood,
That as thy father gave thee flesh and blood,
So gav'st thou me; not from the quarry hew'd,
But of a softer mould, with sense endu'd;
Ev'n softer than thy own, of suppler kind,
More exquisite of taste, and more than man refin'd.
Nor needst thou by thy daughter to be told,
Though now thy sprightly blood with age be cold,
Thou hast been young, and canst remember still,
That when thou hadst the pow'r, thou hadst the will;

And from the paſt experience of thy fires,
Canſt tell with what a tide our ſtrong deſires
Come ruſhing on in youth, and what their rage requires.
And grant thy youth was exercis'd in arms,
When love no leiſure found for ſofter charms;
My tender age in luxury was train'd,
With idle eaſe and pageants entertain'd;
My hours my own, my pleaſures unreſtrain'd.
So bred, no wonder if I took the bent
That ſeem'd ev'n warranted by thy conſent;
For, when the father is too fondly kind,
Such ſeed he ſows, ſuch harveſt ſhall he find.
Blame then thyſelf, as reaſon's law requires,
(Since nature gave, and thou foment'ſt my fires;)
If ſtill thoſe appetites continue ſtrong,
Thou may'ſt conſider I am yet but young:
Conſider too, that having been a wife,
I muſt have taſted of a better life;
And am not to be blam'd, if I renew,
By lawful means, the joys which then I knew.
Where was the crime, if pleaſure I procur'd,
Young, and a woman, and to bliſs inur'd?
That was my caſe, and this is my defence;
I pleas'd myſelf, I ſhunn'd incontinence,
And, urg'd by ſtrong deſires, indulg'd my ſenſe.
Left to myſelf, I muſt avow, I ſtrove
From public ſhame to ſcreen my ſecret love;
And, well acquainted with thy native pride,
Endeavour'd, what I could not help, to hide;
For which a woman's wit an eaſy way ſupply'd.

How this, ſo well contriv'd, ſo cloſely laid,
Was known to thee, or by what chance betray'd,
Is not my care; to pleaſe thy pride alone,
I could have wiſh'd it had been ſtill unknown.
Nor took I Guiſcard by blind fancy led,
Or haſty choice, as many women wed;
But with delib'rate care and ripen'd thought,
At leiſure firſt deſign'd, before I wrought;
On him I reſted, after long debate,
And not without conſidering, fix'd my fate:
His flame was equal, though by mine inſpir'd;
(For ſo the diff'rence of our birth requir'd:)
Had he been born like me, like me his love
Had firſt begun, what mine was forc'd to move:
But thus beginning, thus we perſevere;
Our paſſions yet continue what they were,
Nor length of trial makes our joys the leſs ſincere.
At this my choice, though not by thine allow'd,
(Thy judgment herding with the common crowd)
Thou tak'ſt unjuſt offence; and, led by them,
Doſt leſs the merit, than the man eſteem.
Too ſharply, Tancred, by thy pride betray'd,
Haſt thou againſt the laws of kind inveigh'd;
For all th' offence is in opinion plac'd,
Which deems high birth by lowly choice debas'd:
This thought alone with fury fires thy breaſt,
(For holy marriage juſtifies the reſt)
That I have ſunk the glories of the ſtate,
And mix'd my blood with a plebeian mate:
In which I wonder thou ſhouldſt overſee
Superior cauſes, or impute to me
The fault of Fortune, or the Fates decree.

Or call it Heav'n's imperial pow'r alone,
Which moves on ſprings of juſtice, though unknown;
Yet this we ſee, though order'd for the beſt,
The bad exalted, and the good oppreſs'd;
Permitted laurels grace the lawleſs brow,
Th' unworthy rais'd, the worthy caſt below.
But leaving that; ſearch we the ſecret ſprings,
And backward trace the principles of things;
There ſhall we find, that when the world began,
One common maſs compos'd the mould of man;
One paſte of fleſh on all degrees beſtow'd,
And kneaded up alike with moiſt'ning blood.
The ſame Almighty Pow'r inſpir'd the frame
With kindl'd life, and form'd their ſouls the ſame:
The faculties of intellect, and will,
Diſpens'd with equal hand, diſpos'd with equal ſkill,
Like liberty indulg'd with choice of good or ill.
Thus born alike, from virtue firſt began
The diff'rence that diſtinguiſh'd man from man:
He claim'd no title from deſcent of blood,
But that which made him noble made him good:
Warm'd with more particles of heav'nly flame,
He wing'd his upward flight, and ſoar'd to fame;
The reſt remain'd below, a tribe without a name.
This law, though cuſtom now diverts the courſe,
As Nature's inſtitute, is yet in force;
Uncancell'd, though diſus'd; and he whoſe mind
Is virtuous, is alone of noble kind.
Though poor in fortune, of celeſtial race;
And he commits the crime who calls him baſe.
Now lay the line; and meaſure all thy court,
By inward virtue, not external port,

And find whom juſtly to prefer above
The man on whom my judgment plac'd my love:
So ſhalt thou ſee his parts and perſon ſhine;
And thus compar'd, the reſt a baſe degen'rate line.
Nor took I, when I firſt ſurvey'd thy court,
His valour or his virtues on report;
But truſted what I ought to truſt alone,
Relying on thy eyes, and not my own;
Thy praiſe (and thine was then the public voice)
Firſt recommended Guiſcard to my choice:
Directed thus by thee, I look'd, and found
A man, I thought, deſerving to be crown'd;
Firſt by my father pointed to my ſight,
Nor leſs conſpicuous by his native light;
His mind, his mein, the features of his face,
Excelling all the reſt of human race. [right,
Theſe were thy thoughts, and thou could'ſt judge a-
Till int'reſt made a jaundice in thy ſight.
Or ſhou'd I grant thou didſt not rightly ſee;
Then thou wert firſt deceiv'd, and I deceiv'd by thee.
But if thou ſhalt alledge, through pride of mind,
Thy blood with one of baſe condition join'd,
'Tis falſe; for 'tis not baſeneſs to be poor;
His poverty augments thy crime the more;
Upbraids thy juſtice with the ſcant regard
Of worth: Whom princes praiſe they ſhou'd reward.
Are theſe the kings intruſted by the crowd
With wealth, to be diſpens'd for common good?
The people ſweat not for their king's delight,
T' inrich a pimp, or raiſe a paraſite;
Theirs is the toil; and he who well has ſerv'd
His country, has his country's wealth deſerv'd.

Ev'n mighty monarchs oft are meanly born,
And kings by birth, to loweſt rank return;
All ſubject to the pow'r of giddy Chance;
For Fortune can depreſs, or can advance:
But true nobility, is of the mind,
Not giv'n by Chance, and not to Chance reſign'd.
For the remaining doubt of thy decree,
What to reſolve, and how diſpoſe of me,
Be warn'd to caſt that uſeleſs care aſide,
Myſelf alone will for myſelf provide.
If in thy doating and decrepit age,
Thy ſoul, a ſtranger in thy youth to rage,
Begins in cruel deeds to take delight,
Gorge with my blood thy barb'rous appetite;
For I ſo little am diſpos'd to pray
For life, I would not caſt a wiſh away.
Such as it is, th' offence is all my own;
And what to Guiſcard is already done,
Or to be done, is doom'd by thy decree,
That, if not executed firſt by thee,
Shall on my perſon be perform'd by me.
Away, with women weep, and leave me here,
Fix'd, like a man to die, without a tear;
Or ſave, or ſlay us both this preſent hour;
'Tis all that Fate has left within thy pow'r.
She ſaid: Nor did her father fail to find,
In all ſhe ſpoke, the greatneſs of her mind;
Yet thought ſhe was not obſtinate to die,
Nor deem'd the death ſhe promis'd was ſo nigh:
Secure in this belief, he left the dame,
Reſolv'd to ſpare her life, and ſave her ſhame;

But that deteſted object to remove,
To wreck his vengeance, and to cure her love.
Intent on this, a ſecret order ſign'd,
The death of Guiſcard to his guards enjoin'd;
Strangling was choſen, and the night the time;
A mute revenge, and blind as was the crime:
His faithful heart, a bloody ſacrifice,
Torn from his breaſt, to glut the tyrant's eyes,
Clos'd the ſevere command; for (ſlaves to pay)
What kings decree the ſoldier muſt obey:
Wag'd againſt foes, and, when the wars are o'er,
Fit only to maintain deſpotic pow'r;
Dang'rous to freedom, and deſir'd alone
By kings who ſeek an arbitrary throne.
Such were theſe guards; as ready to have ſlain
The prince himſelf, allur'd with greater gain.
So was the charge perform'd with better will,
By men inur'd to blood, and exercis'd in ill.
Now, though the ſullen ſire had eas'd his mind,
The pomp of his revenge was yet behind,
A pomp prepar'd to grace the preſent he deſign'd.
A goblet rich with gems, and rough with gold,
Of depth and breadth the precious pledge to hold,
With cruel care he choſe; the hollow part
Inclos'd; the lid conceal'd the lover's heart:
Then of his truſted miſchiefs one he ſent,
And bade him with theſe words the gift preſent:
Thy father ſends thee this, to cheer thy breaſt,
And glad thy ſight with what thou lov'ſt the beſt:
As thou haſt pleas'd his eyes and joy'd his mind
With what he lov'd the moſt of human kind.

E'er this the royal dame, who well had weigh'd
The conſequence of what her ſire had ſaid,
Fix'd on her fate, againſt th' expected hour,
Procur'd the means to have it in her pow'r:
For this, ſhe had diſtill'd, with early care,
The juice of ſimples, friendly to deſpair,
A magazine of death; and thus prepar'd,
Secure to die, the fatal meſſage heard:
Then ſmil'd ſevere; nor with a troubl'd look,
Or trembling hand, the fun'ral preſent took;
Ev'n kept her count'nance, when the lid remov'd,
Diſclos'd the heart, unfortunately lov'd:
She needed not be told within whoſe breaſt
It lodg'd; the meſſage had explain'd the reſt.
Or not amaz'd, or hiding her ſurpriſe,
She ſternly on the bearer fix'd her eyes:
Then thus: Tell Tancred, on his daughter's part,
The gold, though precious, equals not the heart:
But he did well to give his beſt; and I,
Who wiſh'd a worthier urn, forgive his poverty.
At this, ſhe curb'd a groan, that elſe had come,
And pauſing, view'd the preſent in the tomb:
Then, to the heart ador'd, devoutly glew'd
Her lips, and raiſing it, her ſpeech renew'd;
Ev'n from my day of birth, to this, the bound
Of my unhappy being, I have found
My father's care, and tenderneſs expreſs'd:
But this laſt act of love excels the reſt:
For this ſo dear a preſent, bear him back
The beſt return that I can live to make.
The meſſenger diſpatch'd, again ſhe view'd
The lov'd remains, and ſighing, thus purſu'd.

Source of my life, and lord of my desires,
In whom I liv'd, with whom my soul expires!
Poor heart! no more the spring of vital heat,
Curs'd be the hands that tore thee from thy seat!
The course is finish'd, which thy Fates decreed,
And thou, from thy corporeal prison freed:
Soon hast thou reach'd the goal with mended pace,
A world of woes dispatch'd in little space:
Forc'd by thy worth, thy foe in death become
Thy friend, has lodg'd thee in a costly tomb;
There yet remain'd thy fun'ral exequies,
The weeping tribute of thy widow's eyes,
And those, indulgent heav'n has found the way
That I, before my death, have leave to pay.
My father ev'n in cruelty is kind,
Or heav'n has turn'd the malice of his mind
To better uses than his hate design'd;
And made th' insult which in his gift appears,
The means to mourn thee with my pious tears;
Which I will pay thee down, before I go,
And save myself the pains to weep below,
If souls can weep; though once I meant to meet
My fate with face unmov'd, and eyes unwet;
Yet since I have thee here in narrow room,
My tears shall set thee first afloat within thy tomb:
Then (as I know thy spirit hovers nigh)
Under thy friendly conduct will I fly
To regions unexplor'd, secure to share
Thy state; nor hell shall punishment appear;
And Heav'n is double Heav'n, if thou art there.
She said: Her brimful eyes, that ready stood,
And only wanted will to weep a flood,

Releas'd their watry ſtore, and pour'd amain,
Like clouds low hung, a ſober ſhow'r of rain;
Mute ſolemn ſorrow, free from female noiſe,
Such as the majeſty of grief deſtroys:
For, bending o'er the cup, the tears ſhe ſhed
Seem'd by the poſture to diſcharge her head,
O'er-fill'd before; and oft (her mouth apply'd
To the cold heart) ſhe kiſs'd at once, and cry'd.
Her maids, who ſtood amaz'd, nor knew the cauſe
Of her complaining, nor whoſe heart it was;
Yet all due meaſures of her mourning kept,
Did office at the dirge, and by infection wept;
And oft enquir'd th' occaſion of her grief,
(Unanſwer'd but by ſighs), and offer'd vain relief.
At length, her ſtock of tears already ſhed,
She wip'd her eyes, ſhe rais'd her drooping head,
And thus purſu'd: O ever faithful heart,
I have perform'd the ceremonial part,
The decencies of grief; it reſts behind,
That as our bodies were, our ſouls be join'd:
To thy whate'er abode my ſhade convey,
And as an elder ghoſt, direct the way.
She ſaid; and bad the vial to be brought,
Where ſhe before had brew'd the deadly draught,
Firſt pouring out the med'cinable bane,
The heart, her tears had rins'd, ſhe bath'd again;
Then down her throat the death ſecurely throws,
And quaffs a long oblivion of her woes.

This done, ſhe mounts the genial bed, and there,
(Her body firſt compos'd with honeſt care,)
Attends the welcome reſt; her hands yet hold
Cloſe to her heart, the monumental gold;

Nor farther word ſhe ſpoke, but clos'd her ſight,
And quiet, ſought the covert of the night.
The damſels, who the while in ſilence mourn'd,
Not knowing, nor ſuſpecting death ſuborn'd;
Yet, as their duty was, to Tancred ſent,
Who, conſcious of th' occaſion, fear'd th' event.
Alarm'd, and with preſaging heart he came,
And drew the curtains, and expos'd the dame
To loathſome light; then with a late relief
Made vain efforts to mitigate her grief.
She, what ſhe could, excluding day, her eyes
Kept firmly ſeal'd, and ſternly thus replies:
Tancred, reſtrain thy tears, unſought by me,
And ſorrow, unavailing now to thee:
Did ever man before affict his mind,
To ſee th' effects of what himſelf deſign'd?
Yet if thou haſt remaining in thy heart
Some ſenſe of love, ſome unextinguiſh'd part
Of former kindneſs, largely once profeſs'd,
Let me by that adjure thy harden'd breaſt,
Not to deny thy daughter's laſt requeſt:
The ſecret love which I ſo long enjoy'd,
And ſtill conceal'd, to gratify thy pride,
Thou haſt disjoin'd; but, with my dying breath,
Seek not, I beg thee, to disjoin our death.
Where-e'er his corps by thy command is laid,
Thither let mine in public be convey'd;
Expos'd in open view, and ſide by ſide,
Acknowledg'd as a bridegroom and a bride.
The prince's anguiſh hinder'd his reply;
And ſhe, who felt her fate approaching nigh,

Seiz'd the cold heart, and heaving to her breaſt,
Here, precious pledge, ſhe ſaid, ſecurely reſt.
Theſe accents were her laſt; the creeping death
Benumb'd her ſenſes firſt, then ſtopp'd her breath.
Thus ſhe for diſobedience juſtly dy'd;
The ſire was juſtly puniſh'd for his pride.
The youth, leaſt guilty, ſuffer'd for th' offence
Of duty violated to his prince;
Who late repenting of his cruel deed,
One common ſepulcher for both decreed;
Intomb'd the wretched pair in royal ſtate,
And on their monument inſcrib'd their fate.

BAUCIS

AND

PHILEMON.

Out of the EIGHTH BOOK of OVID's METAMORPHOSES.

The author, purſuing the deeds of Theſeus, relates how he, with his friend Perithous, were invited by Achelous, the River-God, to ſtay with him, till his waters were abated. Achelous entertains them with a relation of his own love to Perimele, who was changed into an iſland by Neptune, at his requeſt. Perithous, being an atheiſt, derides the legend, and denies the power of the gods to work that miracle. Lelex, another companion of Theſeus, to confirm the ſtory of Achelous, relates another metamorphoſis of Baucis and Philemon into trees; of which he was partly an eye-witneſs.

THUS Achelous ends: His audience hear,
With admiration, and admiring, fear
The pow'rs of heav'n; except Ixion's ſon,
Who laugh'd at all the gods, believ'd in none:

He ſhook his impious head, and thus replies,
Theſe legends are no more than pious lies:
You attribute too much to heavenly ſway,
To think they give us forms, and take away.
The reſt of better minds, their ſenſe declar'd
Againſt this doctrine, and with horror heard.
Then Lelex roſe, an old experienc'd man,
And thus with ſober gravity began:
Heav'ns pow'r is infinite; earth, air, and ſea,
The manufacture maſs, the making pow'r obey:
By proof to clear your doubt; in Phrygian ground
Two neighb'ring trees, with walls encompaſs'd round,
Stand on a mod'rate riſe, with wonder ſhown,
One a hard oak, a ſofter linden one:
I ſaw the place and them, by Pittheus ſent
To Phrygian realms, my grandſire's government.
Not far from thence is ſeen a lake, the haunt
Of coots, and of the fiſhing cormorant:
Here Jove with Hermes came; but in diſguiſe
Of mortal men conceal'd their deities;
One laid aſide his thunder, one his rod;
And many toilſome ſteps together trod:
For harbour at a thouſand doors they knock'd,
Not one of all the thouſand but was lock'd.
At laſt an hoſpitable houſe they found,
A homely ſhade, the roof not far from ground,
Was thatch'd with reeds, and ſtraw together bound.
There Baucis and Philemon liv'd, and there
Had liv'd long marry'd, and a happy pair:
Now old in love, though little was their ſtore,
Inur'd to want, their poverty they bore,
Nor aim'd at wealth, profeſſing to be poor.

For maſter or for ſervant here to call,
Was all alike, where only two were all.
Command was none, where equal love was paid,
Or rather both commanded, both obey'd.
From lofty roofs, the gods repuls'd before,
Now ſtooping, enter'd through the little door:
The man (their hearty welcome firſt expreſs'd)
A common ſettle drew for either gueſt,
Inviting each his weary limbs to reſt.
But e'er they ſat, officious Baucis lays
Two cuſhions ſtuff'd with ſtraw, the ſeat to raiſe;
Coarſe, but the beſt ſhe had; then rakes the load
Of aſhes from the hearth, and ſpreads abroad
The living coals; and, leſt they ſhou'd expire,
With leaves and barks ſhe feeds her infant-fire;
It ſmoaks; and then with trembling breath ſhe blows,
Till in a chearful blaze the flames aroſe.
With bruſh-wood and with chips ſhe ſtrengthens theſe,
And adds at laſt the boughs of rotten trees.
The fire thus form'd, ſhe ſets the kettle on,
(Like burniſh'd gold the little ſeether ſhone);
Next took the colworts which her huſband got
From his own ground, (a ſmall well watter'd ſpot);
She ſtripp'd the ſtalks of all their leaves; the beſt
She cull'd, and then with handy-care ſhe dreſs'd.
High o'er the hearth a chine of bacon hung;
Good old Philemon ſeiz'd it with a prong,
And from the ſooty rafter drew it down;
Then cut a ſlice, but ſcarce enough for one;
Yet a large portion of a little ſtore,
Which for their ſakes alone he wiſh'd were more.

This in the pot he plung'd without delay,
To tame the fleſh, and drain the ſalt away.
The time between, before the fire they ſat,
And ſhorten'd the delay by pleaſing chat.
A beam there was, on which a beechen pail
Hung by the handle on a driven nail:
This fill'd with water, gently warm'd, they ſet
Before their gueſts; in this they bath'd their feet,
And after with clean towels dry'd their ſweat.
This done, the hoſt produc'd the genial bed,
Sallow the feet, the borders, and the ſted,
Which with no coſtly coverlet they ſpread;
But coarſe old garments; yet ſuch robes as theſe
They laid alone at feaſts and holidays.
The good old huſwife tucking up her gown,
The table ſets; th' invited gods lie down.
The trivet-table of a foot was lame,
A blot which prudent Baucis overcame,
Who thruſts beneath the limping leg a ſherd,
So was the mended board exactly rear'd:
Then rubb'd it o'er with newly-gather'd mint,
A wholeſom herb, that breath'd a grateful ſcent.
Pallas began the feaſt, where firſt was ſeen
The party-colour'd olive, black, and green:
Autumnal cornels next in order ſerv'd,
In lees of wine well pickl'd and preſerv'd:
A garden-ſallad was the third ſupply,
Of endive, radiſhes, and ſuccory:
Then curds and cream, the flow'r of country-fare,
And new-laid eggs, which Baucis' buſy care
Turn'd by a gentle fire, and roaſted rare.

All these in earthen ware were serv'd to board;
And next in place an earthen pitcher, stor'd
With liquor of the best the cottage cou'd afford.
This was the table's ornament, and pride,
With figures wrought: Like pages at his side
Stood beechen bowls; and these were shining clean,
Varnish'd with wax without, and lin'd within.
By this the boiling kettle had prepar'd,
And to the table sent the smoaking lard;
On which with eager appetite they dine,
A sav'ry bit, that serv'd to relish wine:
The wine itself was suiting to the rest,
Still working in the must, and lately press'd.
The second course succeeds like that before,
Plums, apples, nuts, and of their wintry store,
Dry figs, and grapes, and wrinkl'd dates were set
In cannisters, t'enlarge the little treat:
All these a milk-white honey-comb surround,
Which in the midst the country-banquet crown'd:
But the kind hosts their entertainment grace
With hearty welcome, and an open face:
In all they did, you might discern with ease
A willing mind, and a desire to please.
Mean time the beechen bowls went round, and still
Though often empty'd, were observ'd to fill;
Fill'd without hands, and of their own accord
Ran without feet, and danc'd about the board.
Devotion seiz'd the pair, to see the feast
With wine, and of no common grape, increas'd;
And up they held their hands, and fell to pray'r,
Excusing as they cou'd their country-fair.

One goose they had, ('twas all they cou'd allow)
A wakeful cent'ry, and on duty now,
Whom to the gods for sacrifice they vow:
Her with malicious zeal the couple view'd;
She ran for life, and limping they pursu'd:
Full well the fowl perceiv'd their bad intent,
And wou'd not make her master's compliment;
But persecuted, to the pow'rs she flies,
And close between the legs of Jove she lies:
He with a gracious ear the suppliant heard,
And sav'd her life; then what he was declar'd,
And own'd the god. The neighbourhood, said he,
Shall justly perish for impiety:
You stand alone exempted; but obey
With speed, and follow where we lead the way:
Leave these accurs'd; and to the mountain's height
Ascend; nor once look backward in your flight.
They haste, and what their tardy feet deny'd,
The trusty staff (their better leg) supply'd.
An arrow's flight they wanted to the top,
And there secure, but spent with travel, stop;
Then turn their now no more forbidden eyes;
Lost in a lake the floated level lies;
A watery desart covers all the plains,
Their cote alone, as in an isle, remains:
Wond'ring with weeping eyes, while they deplore
Their neighbours fate, and country now no more;
Their little shed, scarce large enough for two,
Seems, from the ground increas'd, in heighth and bulk to grow.

A ſtately temple ſhoots within the ſkies,
The crotchets of their cot in columns riſe:
The pavement poliſh'd marble they behold, [gold.
The gates with ſculpture grac'd, the ſpires and tiles of
Then thus the ſire of Gods, with look ſerene:
Speak thy deſire, thou only juſt of men;
And thou, O woman, only worthy found
To be with ſuch a man in marriage bound.
A while they whiſper; then to Jove addreſs'd,
Philemon thus prefers their joint requeſt.
We crave to ſerve before your ſacred ſhrine,
And offer at your altars rites divine:
And ſince not any action of our life
Has been polluted with domeſtic ſtrife,
We beg one hour of death; that neither ſhe
With widows tears may live to bury me,
Nor weeping I, with wither'd arms may bear
My breathleſs Baucis to the ſepulcher.
The godheads ſign their ſuit. They run their race
In the ſame tenor all th' appointed ſpace:
Then, when their hour was come, while they relate
Theſe paſt adventures at the temple-gate,
Old Baucis is by old Philemon ſeen
Sprouting with ſudden leaves of ſprightly green:
Old Baucis look'd where old Philemon ſtood,
And ſaw his lengthen'd arms a ſprouting wood:
New roots their faſten'd feet begin to bind,
Their bodies ſtiffen in a riſing rind:
Then e'er the bark above their ſhoulders grew,
They give and take at once their laſt adieu:
At once, farewel, O faithful ſpouſe, they ſaid;
At once th' incroaching rinds their cloſing lips invade.

Ev'n yet, an ancient Tyanaean ſhows
A ſpreading oak, that near a linden grows;
The neighbourhood confirm the prodigy,
Grave men, not vain of tongue, or like to lie.
I ſaw myſelf the garlands on their boughs,
And tables hung for gifts of granted vows;
And off'ring freſher up, with pious pray'r,
The good, ſaid I, are God's peculiar care, [ſhare.
And ſuch as honour heav'n, ſhall heav'nly honour

PYGMALION
AND THE
STATUE.
Out of the TENTH BOOK of OVID's METAMORPHOSES.

The Propaetides, for their impudent behaviour, being turned into ſtone by Venus, Pygmalion, Prince of Cyprus, deteſted all women for their ſake, and reſolved never to marry: He falls in love with a ſtatue of his own making, which is changed into a maid, whom he marries. One of his deſcendants is Cinyras, the father of Myrrha; the daughter inceſtuouſly loves her own father; for which ſhe is changed into the tree which bears her name. Theſe two ſtories immediately follow each other, and are admirably well connected.

PYGMALION loathing their laſcivious life,
Abhorr'd all womankind, but moſt a wife:
So ſingle choſe to live, and ſhunn'd to wed,
Well pleas'd to want a conſort of his bed.
Yet fearing idleneſs, the nurſe of ill,
In ſculpture exercis'd his happy ſkill;

And carv'd in iv'ry ſuch a maid, ſo fair,
As Nature could not with his art compare,
Were ſhe to work; but in her own defence
Muſt take her pattern here, and copy hence.
Pleas'd with his idol, he commends, admires,
Adores; and laſt, the thing ador'd deſires.
A very virgin in her face was ſeen,
And, had ſhe mov'd, a living maid had been:
One wou'd have thought ſhe cou'd have ſtirr'd; but ſtrove
With modeſty, and was aſham'd to move.
Art, hid with art, ſo well perform'd the cheat,
It caught the carver with his own deceit:
He knows 'tis madneſs, yet he muſt adore;
And ſtill the more he knows it, loves the more:
The fleſh, or what ſo ſeems, he touches oft,
Which feels ſo ſmooth, that he believes it ſoft.
Fir'd with this thought, at once he ſtrain'd the breaſt,
And on the lips a burning kiſs impreſs'd.
'Tis true, the harden'd breaſt reſiſts the gripe,
And the cold lips return a kiſs unripe:
But when, retiring back, he look'd again,
To think it iv'ry, was a thought too mean:
So wou'd believe ſhe kiſs'd, and courting more,
Again embrac'd her naked body o'er;
And ſtraining hard the ſtatue, was afraid
His hands had made a dint, and hurt his maid:
Explor'd her, limb by limb, and fear'd to find
So rude a gripe had left a livid mark behind.
With flatt'ry now, he ſeeks her mind to move,
And now with gifts (the pow'rful bribes of love:)
He furniſhes her cloſet firſt; and fills
The crowded ſhelves with rarities of ſhells;

Adds orient pearls, which from the conchs he drew,
And all the ſparkling ſtones of various hue:
And parrots, imitating human tongue,
And ſinging-birds in ſilver cages hung;
And ev'ry fragrant flow'r, and od'rous green,
Were ſorted well, with lumps of amber laid between:
Rich, faſhionable robes her perſon deck,
Pendants her ears, and pearls adorn her neck:
Her taper'd fingers too with rings are grac'd,
And an embroider'd zone ſurrounds her ſlender waſte.
Thus like a queen array'd, ſo richly dreſs'd,
Beauteous ſhe ſhew'd, but naked ſhew'd the beſt.
Then, from the floor, he rais'd a royal bed,
With cov'rings of Sydonian purple ſpread:
The ſolemn rites perform'd, he calls her bride,
With blandiſhments invites her to his ſide,
And as ſhe were with vital ſenſe poſſeſs'd,
Her head did on a plumy pillow reſt.

The feaſt of Venus came, a ſolemn day,
To which the Cypriots due devotion pay;
With gilded horns, the milk-white heifers led,
Slaughter'd before the ſacred altars, bled:
Pygmalion off'ring, firſt, approach'd the ſhrine,
And then with pray'rs implor'd the pow'rs divine.
Almighty gods, if all we mortals want,
If all we can require, be yours to grant;
Make this fair ſtatue mine, he wou'd have ſaid,
But chang'd his words, for ſhame; and only pray'd,
Give me the likeneſs of my iv'ry maid.

The golden goddeſs, preſent at the pray'r,
Well knew he meant th' inanimated fair,

And gave the ſign of granting his deſire;
For thrice in chearful flames aſcends the fire.
The youth, returning to his miſtreſs, hies,
And impudent in hope, with ardent eyes,
And beating breaſt, by the dear ſtatue lies.
He kiſſes her white lips, renews the bliſs,
And looks, and thinks they redden at the kiſs;
He thought them warm before; nor longer ſtays,
But next his hand on her hard boſom lays.
Hard as it was, beginning to relent,
It ſeem'd, the breaſt beneath his fingers bent;
He felt again, his fingers made a print,
'Twas fleſh, but fleſh ſo firm, it roſe againſt the dint:
The pleaſing taſk he fails not to renew;
Soft, and more ſoft at ev'ry touch it grew;
Like pliant wax, when chafing hands reduce
The former maſs to form, and frame for uſe.
He would believe, but yet is ſtill in pain,
And tries his argument of ſenſe again,
Preſſes the pulſe, and feels the leaping vein.
Convinc'd, o'erjoy'd, his ſtudied thanks and praiſe
To her who made the miracle he pays.
Then lips to lips he join'd; now freed from fear,
He found the ſavour of the kiſs ſincere.
At this the waken'd image op'd her eyes,
And view'd at once the light and lover with ſurprize.
The goddeſs preſent at the match ſhe made,
So bleſs'd the bed, ſuch fruitfulneſs convey'd,
That e'er ten moons had ſharpen'd either horn,
To crown their bliſs, a lovely boy was born;
Paphos his name, who grown to manhood, wall'd
The city Paphos, from the founder call'd.

CINYRAS

AND

MYRRHA.

Out of the TENTH BOOK of OVID's METAMORPHOSES.

There needs no connection of this ſtory with the former; for the beginning of this immediately follows the end of the laſt: The reader is only to take notice, that Orpheus, who relates both, was by birth a Thracian; and his country far diſtant from Cyprus, where Myrrha was born, and from Arabia, whither ſhe fled. You will ſee the reaſon of this note ſoon after the firſt lines of this fable.

NOR him alone produc'd the fruitful queen;
But Cinyras, who like his ſire had been
A happy prince, had he not been a ſire.
Daughters and fathers from my ſong retire;
I ſing of horror; and could I prevail,
You ſhou'd not hear, or not believe my tale.
Yet if the pleaſure of my ſong be ſuch,
That you will hear, and credit me too much,

Attentive liſten to the laſt event,
And with the ſin believe the puniſhment.
Since Nature cou'd behold ſo dire a crime,
I gratulate at leaſt my native clime,
That ſuch a land, which ſuch a monſter bore,
So far is diſtant from our Thracian ſhore.
Let Araby extol her happy coaſt,
Her cinnamon and ſweet amomum boaſt,
Her fragrant flow'rs, her trees with precious tears,
Her ſecond harveſts, and her double years; [bears?
How can the land be call'd ſo bleſs'd that Myrrha
Nor all her od'rous tears can cleanſe her crime,
Her plant alone deforms the happy clime.
Cupid denies to have inflam'd thy heart,
Diſowns thy love, and vindicates his dart:
Some fury gave thee thoſe infernal pains,
And ſhot her venom'd vipers in thy veins.
To hate thy ſire had merited a curſe;
But ſuch an impious love deſerv'd a worſe.
The neighb'ring monarchs, by thy beauty led,
Contend in crowds, ambitious of thy bed:
The world is at thy choice; except but one,
Except but him thou canſt not chuſe alone.
She knew it too, the miſerable maid,
E'er impious love her better thoughts betray'd,
And thus within her ſecret ſoul ſhe ſaid:
Ah Myrrha! whether wou'd thy wiſhes tend?
Ye gods, ye ſacred laws, my ſoul defend
From ſuch a crime, as all mankind deteſt,
And never lodg'd before in human breaſt!
But is it ſin? or makes my mind alone
Th' imagin'd ſin? for Nature makes it none.

What tyrant then theſe envious laws began,
Made not for any other beaſt, but man!
The father-bull his daughter may beſtride,
The horſe may make his mother-mare a bride;
What piety forbids the luſty ram
Or more ſalacious goat, to rut their dam?
The hen is free to wed the chick ſhe bore,
And make a huſband whom ſhe hatch'd before.
All creatures elſe are of a happier kind,
Whom nor ill-natur'd laws from pleaſure bind,
Nor thoughts of ſin diſturb their peace of mind.
But man, a ſlave of his own making lives;
The fool denies himſelf what Nature gives:
Too-buſy ſenates, with an over care
To make us better than our kind can bear,
Have daſh'd a ſpice of envy in the laws,
And ſtraining up too high, have ſpoil'd the cauſe.
Yet ſome wiſe nations break their cruel chains,
And own no laws, but thoſe which love ordains:
Where happy daughters with their ſires are join'd,
And piety is doubly paid in kind.
O that I had been born in ſuch a clime,
Not here, where 'tis the country makes the crime!
But whither won'd my impious fancy ſtray?
Hence hopes, and ye forbidden thoughts away!
His worth deſerves to kindle my deſires,
But with the love that daughters bear to ſires.
Then had not Cinyras my father been,
What hinder'd Myrrha's hopes to be his queen?
But the perverſeneſs of my fate is ſuch,
That he's not mine, becauſe he's mine too much:

Our kindred blood debars a better tie;
He might be nearer, were he not ſo nigh.
Eyes and their objects never muſt unite,
Some diſtance is requir'd to help the ſight:
Fain wou'd I travel to ſome foreign ſhore,
Never to ſee my native country more;
So might I to myſelf myſelf reſtore;
So might my mind theſe impious thoughts remove,
And ceaſing to behold, might ceaſe to love.
But ſtay I muſt, to feed my famiſh'd ſight,
To talk, to kiſs; and more, if more I might.
More, impious maid! what more canſt thou deſign,
To make a monſtrous mixture in thy line,
And break all ſtatutes human and divine?
Canſt thou be call'd (to ſave thy wretched life)
Thy mother's rival, and thy father's wife?
Confound ſo many ſacred names in one,
Thy brother's mother, ſiſter to thy ſon!
And fear'ſt thou not to ſee th' infernal bands,
Their heads with ſnakes, with torches arm'd their hands,
Full at thy face, th' avenging brands to bear,
And ſhake the ſerpents from their hiſſing hair?
But thou in time th' increaſing ill controul,
Nor firſt debauch the body by the ſoul;
Secure the ſacred quiet of thy mind,
And keep the ſanctions Nature has deſign'd.
Suppoſe I ſhou'd attempt, th' attempt were vain;
No thoughts like mine his ſinleſs ſoul profane:
Obſervant of the right; and O, that he
Cou'd cure my madneſs, or be mad like me!
Thus ſhe: But Cinyras, who daily ſees
A crowd of noble ſuitors at his knees,

Among ſo many, knew not whom to chuſe,
Irreſolute to grant, or to refuſe.
But having told their names, enquir'd of her,
Who pleas'd her beſt, and whom ſhe would prefer?
The bluſhing maid ſtood ſilent with ſurprize,
And on her father fix'd her ardent eyes,
And looking ſigh'd, and as ſhe ſigh'd, began
Round tears to ſhed, that ſcalded as they ran.
The tender ſire, who ſaw her bluſh and cry,
Aſcrib'd it all to maiden modeſty,
And dry'd the falling drops; and yet more kind,
He ſtroak'd her cheeks, and holy kiſſes join'd.
She felt a ſecret venom fire her blood,
And found more pleaſure than a daughter ſhou'd;
And aſk'd again, what lover of the crew
She lik'd the beſt, ſhe anſwer'd, One like you.
Miſtaking what ſhe meant, her pious will
He prais'd, and bade her ſo continue ſtill:
The word of pious heard, ſhe bluſh'd with ſhame
Of ſecret guilt, and cou'd not bear the name.

'Twas now the mid of night, when ſlumbers cloſe
Our eyes, and ſooth our cares with ſoft repoſe;
But no repoſe cou'd wretched Myrrha find,
Her body rolling as ſhe roll'd her mind:
Mad with deſire, ſhe ruminates her ſin,
And wiſhes all her wiſhes o'er again:
Now ſhe deſpaires, and now reſolves to try;
Wou'd not, and wou'd again, ſhe knows not why;
Stops, and returns, makes and retracts the vow;
Fain wou'd begin, but underſtands not how.
As when a pine is hew'd upon the plains,
And the laſt mortal ſtroke alone remains,

Lab'ring in pangs of death, and threat'ning all,
This way and that ſhe nods, conſid'ring where to fall:
So Myrrha's mind, impell'd on either ſide,
Takes ev'ry bent, but cannot long abide:
Irreſolute on which ſhe ſhou'd rely,
At laſt unfix'd in all, is only fix'd to die;
On that ſad thought ſhe reſts, reſolv'd on death,
She riſes, and prepares to choak her breath:
Then while about the beam her zone ſhe ties,
Dear Cinyras, farewel, ſhe ſoftly cries;
For thee I die, and only wiſh to be
Not hated, when thou know'ſt I die for thee:
Pardon the crime, in pity to the cauſe:
This ſaid, about her neck the nooſe ſhe draws.
The nurſe, who lay without, her faithful guard,
Though not the words, the murmurs overheard,
And ſighs and hollow ſounds; ſurpriz'd with fright,
She ſtarts, and leaves her bed, and ſprings a light;
Unlocks the door, and ent'ring out of breath,
The dying ſaw, and inſtruments of death;
She ſhrieks, ſhe cuts the zone, with trembling haſte,
And in her arms her fainting charge embrac'd:
Next, (for ſhe now had leiſure for her tears)
She weeping aſk'd, in theſe her blooming years,
What unforeſeen misfortune caus'd her care,
To loath her life, and languiſh in deſpair!
The maid, with downcaſt eyes, and mute with grief
For death unfiniſh'd, and ill-tim'd relief,
Stood ſullen to her ſuit; the beldame preſs'd
The more to know, and bar'd her wither'd breaſt;
Adjur'd her by the kindly food ſhe drew
From thoſe dry founts, her ſecret ill to ſhew.

Sad Myrrha ſigh'd, and turn'd her eyes aſide;
The nurſe ſtill urg'd, and wou'd not be deny'd:
Nor only promis'd ſecreſy; but pray'd
She might have leave to give her offer'd aid.
Good-will, ſhe ſaid, my want of ſtrength ſupplies,
And diligence ſhall give what age denies:
If ſtrong deſires thy mind to fury move,
With charms and med'cines I can cure thy love:
If envious eyes their hurtful rays have caſt,
More pow'rful verſe ſhall free thee from the blaſt:
If Heav'n offended ſends thee this diſeaſe,
Offended Heav'n with pray'rs we can appeaſe.
What then remains, that can theſe cares procure?
Thy houſe is flouriſhing, thy fortune ſure;
Thy careful mother yet in health ſurvives,
And, to thy comfort, thy kind father lives.
The virgin ſtarted at her father's name,
And ſigh'd profoundly, conſcious of the ſhame.
Nor yet the nurſe her impious love divin'd;
But yet ſurmis'd that love diſturb'd her mind.
Thus thinking, ſhe purſu'd her point, and laid
And lull'd within her lap the mourning maid;
Then ſoftly ſooth'd her thus, I gueſs your grief;
You love, my child; your love ſhall find relief.
My long-experienc'd age ſhall be your guide;
Rely on that, and lay diſtruſt aſide:
No breath of air ſhall on the ſecret blow,
Nor ſhall (what moſt you fear) your father know.
Struck once again, as with a thunder clap,
The guilty virgin bounded from her lap,
And threw her body proſtrate on the bed,
And, to conceal her bluſhes, hid her head;

There ſilent lay, and warn'd her with her hand
To go; but ſhe receiv'd not the command;
Remaining ſtill importunate to know.
Then Myrrha thus: Or aſk no more, or go:
I prithee go, or ſtaying, ſpare my ſhame;
What thou wou'dſt hear, is impious even to name.
At this on high the beldame holds her hands,
And trembling, both with age and terror, ſtands;
Adjures, and falling at her feet intreats,
Sooths her with blandiſhments, and frights with threats,
To tell the crime intended, or diſcloſe
What part of it ſhe knew, if ſhe no farther knows.
And laſt; if conſcious to her counſel made,
Confirms anew the promiſe of her aid.
Now Myrrha rais'd her head; but ſoon oppreſs'd
With ſhame reclin'd it on her nurſe's breaſt;
Bath'd it with tears, and ſtrove to have confeſs'd.
Twice ſhe began, and ſtopp'd; again ſhe try'd;
The fault'ring tongue its office ſtill deny'd.
At laſt her veil before her face ſhe ſpread,
And drew a long preluding ſigh, and ſaid,
O happy mother in thy marriage-bed!
Then groan'd, and ceas'd; the good old woman ſhook;
Stiff were here eyes, and ghaſtly was her look;
Her hoary hair upright with horror ſtood,
Made (to her grief) more knowing than ſhe wou'd:
Much ſhe reproach'd, and many things ſhe ſaid,
To cure the madneſs of th' unhappy maid:
In vain; for Myrrha ſtood convict of ill;
Her reaſon vanquiſh'd, but unchang'd her will:
Perverſe of mind, unable to reply;
She ſtood reſolv'd or to poſſeſs, or die.

At length the fondneſs of a nurſe prevail'd
Againſt her better ſenſe, and virtue fail'd:
Enjoy, my child, ſince ſuch is thy deſire,
Thy love, ſhe ſaid; ſhe durſt not ſay, thy ſire;
Live, though unhappy; live on any terms:
Then with a ſecond oath her faith confirms.
The ſolemn feaſt of Ceres now was near,
When long white linen ſtoles the matrons wear;
Rank'd in proceſſion walk the pious train,
Off'ring firſt-fruits and ſpikes of yellow grain;
For nine long nights the nuptial bed they ſhun,
And, ſanctifying harveſt, lie alone.
Mix'd with the crowd, the queen forſook her lord,
And Ceres' pow'r with ſecret rites ador'd:
The royal couch now vacant for a time,
The crafty crone, officious in her crime,
The curs'd occaſion took; the king ſhe found
Eaſy with wine, and deep in pleaſures drown'd,
Prepar'd for love; the beldame blew the flame,
Confeſs'd the paſſion, but conceal'd the name.
Her form ſhe prais'd; the monarch aſk'd her years,
And ſhe reply'd, the ſame thy Myrrha bears.
Wine and commended beauty fir'd his thought;
Impatient, he commands her to be brought.
Pleas'd with her charge perform'd, ſhe hies her home,
And gratulates the nymph the taſk was overcome.
Myrrha was joy'd the welcome news to hear;
But clogg'd with guilt, the joy was inſincere:
So various, ſo diſcordant is the mind,
That in our will a diff'rent we find.
Ill ſhe preſag'd, and yet purſu'd her luſt;
For guilty pleaſures give a double guſt.

'Twas depth of night; Arctophylax had driv'n
His lazy wain half round the northern heav'n;
When Myrrha haſten'd to the crime deſir'd,
The moon beheld her firſt, and firſt retir'd;
The ſtars amaz'd, ran backward from the ſight,
And (ſhrunk within their ſockets) loſt their light.
Icarius firſt withdraws his holy flame;
The Virgin Sign, in heav'n the ſecond name,
Slides down the belt, and from her ſtation flies,
And night with ſable clouds involves the ſkies.
Bold Myrrha ſtill purſues her black intent;
She ſtumbl'd thrice, (an omen of th' event;)
Thrice ſhriek'd the fun'ral owl, yet on ſhe went,
Secure of ſhame, becauſe ſecure of ſight;
Ev'n baſhful ſins are impudent by night.
Link'd hand in hand, th' accomplice and the dame,
Their way exploring, to the chamber came;
The door was ope, they blindly grope their way,
Where dark in bed th' expecting monarch lay:
Thus far her courage held, but here forſakes;
Her faint knees knock at ev'ry ſtep ſhe makes.
The nearer to her crime, the more within
She feels remorſe and horror of her ſin;
Repents too late her crimimal deſire,
And wiſhes that unknown ſhe cou'd retire.
Her ling'ring thus, the nurſe (who fear'd delay
The fatal ſecret might at length betray)
Pull'd forward, to complete the work begun,
And ſaid to Cinyras, Receive thy own:
Thus ſaying, ſhe deliver'd kind to kind,
Accurs'd, and their devoted bodies join'd.

The ſire, unknowing of the crime, admits
His bowels, and profanes the hallow'd ſheets;
He found ſhe trembl'd, but believ'd ſhe ſtrove
With maiden-modeſty againſt her love, [move.
And ſought with flatt'ring words vain fancies to re-
Perhaps he ſaid, My daughter, ceaſe thy fears,
(Becauſe the title ſuited with her years;)
And Father, ſhe might whiſper him again,
That names might not be wanting to the ſin.
Full of her ſire, ſhe left th' inceſtuous bed,
And carry'd in her womb the crime ſhe bred.
Another and another night ſhe came;
For frequent ſin had left no ſenſe of ſhame:
Till Cinyras deſir'd to ſee her face,
Whoſe body he had held in cloſe embrace,
And brought a taper; the revealer, light,
Expos'd both crime and criminal to ſight.
Grief, rage, amazement, cou'd no ſpeech afford,
But from the ſheath he drew th' avenging ſword;
The guilty fled; the benefit of night,
That favour'd firſt the ſin, ſecur'd the flight.
Long wand'ring through the ſpacious fields, ſhe bent
Her voyage to th' Arabian continent;
Then paſs'd the region which Panchaea join'd,
And flying left the palmy plains behind.
Nine times the moon had mew'd her horns; at length
With travel weary, unſupply'd with ſtrength,
And with the burden of her womb oppreſs'd,
Sabaean fields afford her needful reſt;
There, loathing life, and yet of death afraid,
In anguiſh of her ſpirit thus ſhe pray'd.

Ye pow'rs, if any ſo propitious are,
T' accept my penitence, and hear my pray'r;
Your judgments, I confeſs, are juſtly ſent;
Great ſins deſerve as great a puniſhment:
Yet ſince my life the living will profane,
And ſince my death the happy dead will ſtain,
A middle ſtate your mercy may beſtow,
Betwixt the realms above and thoſe below;
Some other form to wretched Myrrha give,
Nor let her wholly die, nor wholly live.
The pray'rs of penitents are never vain;
At leaſt ſhe did her laſt requeſt obtain:
For while ſhe ſpoke, the ground began to riſe,
And gather'd round her feet, her legs, and thighs;
Her toes in roots deſcend, and ſpreading wide,
A firm foundation for the trunk provide;
Her ſolid bones convert to ſolid wood,
To pith her marrow, and to ſap her blood;
Her arms are boughs, her fingers change their kind,
Her tender ſkin is harden'd into rind.
And now the riſing tree her womb inveſts,
Now, ſhooting upwards ſtill, invades her breaſts,
And ſhades the neck; when, weary with delay,
She ſunk her head within, and met it half the way.
And though with outward ſhape ſhe loſt her ſenſe,
With bitter tears ſhe wept her laſt offence;
And ſtill ſhe weeps, nor ſheds her tears in vain;
For ſtill the precious drops her name retain.
Mean time the miſbegotten infant grows,
And, ripe for birth, diſtends with deadly throws
The ſwelling rind, with unavailing ſtrife,
To leave the wooden-womb, and puſhes into life.

The mother-tree, as if oppreſs'd with pain,
Writhes here and there, to break the bark in vain;
And, like a lab'ring woman, wou'd have pray'd,
But wants a voice to call Lucina's aid:
The bending bole ſends out a hollow ſound,
And trickling tears fall thicker on the ground:
The mild Lucina came uncall'd, and ſtood [wood:
Beſide the ſtruggling boughs, and heard the groaning
Then reach'd her midwife-hand, to ſpeed the throws,
And ſpoke the pow'rful ſpells that babes to birth diſcloſe.
The bark divides, the living load to free,
And ſafe delivers the convulſive tree.
The ready nymphs receive the crying child,
And waſh him in the tears the parent-plant diſtill'd.
They ſwath'd him with their ſcarfs; beneath him ſpread
The ground with herbs; with roſes rais'd his head.
The lovely babe was born with ev'ry grace,
Ev'n envy muſt have prais'd ſo fair a face:
Such was his form, as painters when they ſhow
Their utmoſt art, on naked loves beſtow:
And that their arms no diff'rence might betray,
Give him a bow, or his from Cupid take away.
Time glides along with undiſcover'd haſte,
The future but a length behind the paſt;
So ſwift are years; the babe whom juſt before
His grandſire got, and whom his ſiſter bore;
The drop, the thing which late the tree inclos'd,
And late the yawning bark to life expos'd;
A babe, a boy, a beauteous youth appears,
And lovelier than himſelf at riper years.
Now to the Queen of Love he gave deſires,
And, with her pains, reveng'd his mother's fires.

THE FIRST BOOK OF HOMER'S ILIAS.

The ARGUMENT.

Chryſis, prieſt of Apollo, brings preſents to the Grecian princes, to ranſom his daughter Chryſeis, who was priſoner in the fleet. Agamemnon, the General, whoſe captive and miſtreſs the young lady was, refuſes to deliver her; threatens the venerable old man, and diſmiſſes him with contumely. The prieſt craves vengeance of his god; who ſends a plague among the Greeks: Which occaſions Achilles, their great champion, to ſummon a council of the chief officers. He encourages Calchas, the high prieſt and prophet, to tell the reaſon why the gods were ſo much incens'd againſt them: Calchas is fearfull of provoking Agamemnon, till Achilles engages to protect him: Then, emboldened by the heroe, he accuſes the General as the cauſe of all, by detaining the fair captive, and refuſing the preſents offer'd for her ranſom. By this proceeding, Agamemnon is oblig'd, againſt his will, to reſtore Chryſeis, with gifts, that he might appeaſe the wrath of Phoebus; but, at the ſame time, to

revenge himself on Achilles, sends to seize his slave Briseis. Achilles, thus affronted, complains to his mother Thetis; and begs her to revenge his injury, not only on the General, but on all the army, by giving victory to the Trojans, till the ungrateful king became sensible of his injustice. At the same time, he retires from the camp into his ships, and withdraws his aid from his countrymen. Thetis prefers her son's petition to Jupiter, who grants her suit. Juno suspects her errand, and quarrels with her husband, for his grant; till Vulcan reconciles his parents with a bowl of nectar, and sends them peaceably to bed.

THE wrath of Peleus' son, O Muse, resound;
Whose dire effects the Grecian army found:
And many a heroe, king, and hardy knight,
Were sent, in early youth, to shades of night;
Their limbs a prey to dogs and vultures made;
So was the sov'reign will of Jove obey'd:
From that ill omen'd hour when strife begun
Betwixt Atrides great, and Thetis god-like son,
What pow'r provok'd, and for what cause, relate,
Sow'd, in their breasts, the seeds of stern debate.
Jove's and Latona's son his wrath express'd,
In vengeance of his violated priest,
Against the king of men; who swoln with pride,
Refus'd his presents, and his pray'rs deny'd.
For this the god a swift contagion spread
Amid the camp; where heaps on heaps lay dead.
For venerable Chrysis came to buy,
With gold and gifts of price, his daughter's liberty.

Suppliant before the Grecian chiefs he ſtood;
Awful, and arm'd with enſigns of his god:
Bare was his hoary head; one holy hand [mand.
Held forth his laurel crown, and one his ſceptre of com-
His ſuit was common; but above the reſt,
To both the brother-princes thus addreſs'd.
Ye ſons of Atreus, and ye Grecian pow'rs,
So may the gods who dwell in heav'nly bow'rs
Succeed your ſiege, accord the vows you make,
And give you Troy's imperial town to take;
So, by their happy conduct, may you come
With conqueſt back to your ſweet native home;
As you receive the ranſom which I bring,
(Reſpecting Jove, and the far-ſhooting king,)
And break my daughter's bonds, at my deſire;
And glad with her return her grieving ſire.
With ſhouts of loud acclaim the Greeks decree
To take the gifts, to ſet the damſel free.
The king of men alone with fury burn'd;
And haughty, theſe opprobrious words return'd:
Hence, holy dotard, and avoid my ſight,
E'er evil intercept thy tardy flight;
Nor dare to tread this interdicted ſtrand,
Leſt not that idle ſceptre in thy hand,
Nor thy god's crown, my vow'd revenge withſtand.
Hence, on thy life; the captive-maid is mine;
Whom not for price or pray'rs I will reſign.
Mine ſhe ſhall be, till creeping age and time
Her bloom have wither'd, and conſum'd her prime.
Till then my royal bed ſhe ſhall attend;
And having firſt adorn'd it, late aſcend.

This, for the night; by day, the web and loom,
And homely houſhold-taſk, ſhall be her doom;
Far from thy lov'd embrace, and her ſweet native home.

He ſaid: The helpleſs prieſt reply'd no more,
But ſped his ſteps along the hoarſe-reſounding ſhore:
Silent he fled; ſecure at length he ſtood,
Devoutly curs'd his foes, and thus invok'd his god.

O ſource of ſacred light, attend my pray'r,
God with the ſilver bow, and golden hair!
Whom Chryſa, Cilla, Tenedos obeys,
And whoſe broad eye their happy ſoil ſurveys:
If, Smintheus, I have pour'd before thy ſhrine
The blood of oxen, goats, and ruddy wine,
And larded thighs on loaded altars laid,
Hear, and my juſt revenge propitious aid.
Pierce the proud Greeks, and with thy ſhafts atteſt
How much thy pow'r is injur'd in thy prieſt.

He pray'd, and Phoebus hearing, urg'd his flight,
With fury kindled, from Olympus height;
His quiver o'er his ample ſhoulders threw;
His bow twang'd, and his arrows rattl'd as they flew.
Black as a ſtormy night, he rang'd around
The tents, and compaſs'd the devoted ground.
Then with full force his deadly bow he bent,
And feather'd fates among the mules and ſumpters ſent:
Th' eſſay of rage on faithful dogs the next;
And laſt, in human hearts his arrows fix'd.
The god nine days the Greeks at rovers kill'd,
Nine days the camp with fun'ral fires was fill'd;
The tenth, Achilles, by the queen's command,
Who bears heav'n's awful ſceptre in her hand,

A council ſummon'd: For the goddeſs griev'd
Her favour'd hoſt ſhou'd periſh unreliev'd.
The kings, aſſembl'd, ſoon their chief incloſe;
Then from his ſeat the goddeſs-born aroſe,
And thus undaunted ſpoke: What now remains,
But that once more we tempt the watry plains,
And wandring homeward, ſeek our ſafety hence,
In flight at leaſt if we can find defence?
Such woes at once encompaſs us about,
The plague within the camp, the ſword without.
Conſult, O king, the prophets of th' event:
And whence theſe ills, and what the gods intent,
Let them by dreams explore; for dreams from Jove
are ſent.
What want of offer'd victims, what offence
In fact committed cou'd the Sun incenſe,
To deal his deadly ſhafts? what may remove
His ſettled hate, and reconcile his love?
That he may look propitious on our toils;
And hungry graves no more be glutted with our ſpoils.
Thus to the king of men the hero ſpoke;
Then Calchas the deſir'd occaſion took:
Calchas the ſacred ſeer, who had in view [knew.
Things preſent and the paſt; and things to come fore-
Supreme of augurs, who, by Phoebus taught,
The Grecian pow'rs to Troy's deſtruction brought,
Skill'd in the ſecret cauſes of their woes,
The reverend prieſt in graceful act aroſe:
And thus beſpoke Pelides: Care of Jove,
Favour'd of all th' immortal pow'rs above;
Wou'dſt thou the ſeeds deep ſown of miſchief know,
And why provok'd Apollo bends his bow?

Plight firſt thy faith, inviolably true,
To ſave me from thoſe ills that may enſue.
For I ſhall tell ungrateful truths, to thoſe
Whoſe boundleſs pow'r of life and death diſpoſe.
And ſov'reigns ever jealous of their ſtate,
Forgive not thoſe whom once they mark for hate;
Ev'n tho' th' offence they ſeemingly digeſt,
Revenge, like embers, rak'd within their breaſt,
Burſts forth in flames; whoſe unreſiſted pow'r
Will ſeize th' unwary wretch, and ſoon devour.
Such, and no leſs is he, on whom depends [fends.
The ſum of things; and whom my tongue of force of-
Secure me then from his foreſeen intent, [vent.
That what his wrath may doom, thy valour may pre-
To this the ſtern Achilles made reply:
Be bold; and on my plighted faith rely,
To ſpeak what Phoebus has inſpir'd thy ſoul
For common good; and ſpeak without controul.
His godhead I invoke, by him I ſwear,
That while my noſtrils draw this vital air,
None ſhall preſume to violate thoſe bands;
Or touch thy perſon with unhallow'd hands;
Ev'n not the king of men that all commands.
At this, reſuming heart, the prophet ſaid;
Nor hecatombs unſlain, nor vows unpaid,
On Greeks, accurs'd, this dire contagion bring;
Or call for vengeance from the bowyer king;
But he the tyrant, whom none dares reſiſt,
Affronts the godhead in his injur'd prieſt;
He keeps the damſel captive in his chain,
And preſents are refus'd, and pray'rs preferr'd in vain.

For this th' avenging pow'r employs his darts;
And empties all his quivers in our hearts.
Thus will perſiſt, relentleſs in his ire,
Till the fair ſlave be render'd to her ſire:
And ranſom-free reſtor'd to his abode,
With ſacrifice to reconcile the god.
Then he, perhaps, atton'd by pray'r, may ceaſe
His vengeance juſtly vow'd, and give the peace.

Thus having ſaid, he ſate: Thus anſwer'd then
Upſtarting from his throne, the king of men,
His breaſt with fury fill'd his eyes with fire;
Which rowling round, he ſhot in ſparkles on the ſire.
Augur of ill, whoſe tongue was never found
Without a prieſtly curſe or boding ſound;
For not one bleſs'd event foretold to me
Paſs'd through that mouth, or paſs'd unwillingly.
And now thou doſt with lies the throne invade,
By practice harden'd in thy ſland'ring trade.
Obtending heav'n, for whate'er ills befall;
And ſputtring under ſpecious names thy gall.
Now Phoebus is provok'd; his rites and laws
Are in his prieſt profan'd, and I the cauſe.
Since I detain a ſlave, my ſov'reign prize;
And ſacred gold, your idol-god, deſpiſe.
I love her well; and well her merits claim,
To ſtand preferr'd before my Grecian dame.
Not Clytemneſtra's ſelf, in beauty's bloom,
More charm'd, or better ply'd the various loom.
Mine is the maid; and brought in happy hour
With ev'ry ſhouſhold-grace adorn'd, to bleſs my nup-
tial bow'r.

Yet ſhall ſhe be reſtor'd; ſince public good
For private int'reſt ought not be withſtood,
To ſave th' effuſion of my people's blood.
But right requires, if I reſign my own,
I ſhou'd not ſuffer for your ſakes alone;
Alone excluded from the prize I gain'd,
And by your common ſuffrage have obtain'd.
The ſlave without a ranſom ſhall be ſent:
It reſts for you to make th' equivalent.
To this the fierce Theſſalian prince reply'd:
O firſt in pow'r, but paſſing all in pride!
Griping, and ſtill tenacious of thy hold,
Wouldſt thou the Grecian chiefs, though largely ſoul'd,
Shou'd give the prizes they had gain'd before;
And with their loſs thy ſacrilege reſtore?
Whate'er by force of arms the ſoldier got,
Is each his own, by dividend of lot:
Which to reſume were both unjuſt and baſe:
Not to be borne, but by a ſervile race.
But this we can: If Saturn's ſon beſtows
The ſack of Troy, which he by promiſe owes;
Then ſhall the conquering Greeks thy loſs reſtore,
And with large int'reſt, make th' advantage more.
To this Atrides anſwer'd, Though thy boaſt
Aſſumes the foremoſt name of all our hoſt,
Pretend not, mighty man, that what is mine
Controll'd by thee, I tamely ſhou'd reſign.
Shall I releaſe the prize I gain'd by right,
In taken towns, and many a bloody fight,
While thou detain'ſt Briſeis in thy bands,
But prieſtly gloſſing on the god's commands?

Reſolve on this, (a ſhort alternative)
Quit mine, or, in exchange, another give;
Elſe I, aſſure thy ſoul, by ſov'reign right
Will ſeize the captive in thy own deſpight;
Or from ſtout Ajax, or Ulyſſes, bear
What other prize my fancy ſhall prefer:
Then ſoftly murmur, or aloud complain,
Rage as you pleaſe, you ſhall reſiſt in vain.
But more of this, in proper time and place,
To things of greater moment let us paſs.
A ſhip to ſail the ſacred ſeas prepare;
Proud in her trim; and put on board the fair,
With ſacrifice and gifts, and all the pomp of pray'r.
The crew well choſen, the command ſhall be
In Ajax; or, if other I decree,
In Creta's king, or Ithacus; or, if I pleaſe, in thee:
Moſt fit thyſelf to ſee perform'd th' intent
For which my pris'ner from my ſight is ſent;
(Thanks to thy pious care) that Phoebus may relent.
At this, Achilles roul'd his furious eyes,
Fix'd on the king aſkant; and thus replies.
O, impudent, regardful of thy own,
Whoſe thoughts are center'd on thyſelf alone!
Advanc'd to ſovereign ſway, for better ends
Than thus like abject ſlaves to treat thy friends.
What Greek is he, that urg'd by thy command,
Againſt the Trojan troops will lift his hand?
Not I: Nor ſuch inforc'd reſpect I owe;
Nor Pergamus I hate, nor Priam is my foe.
What wrong from Troy remote, cou'd I ſuſtain,
To leave my fruitful ſoil, and happy reign,
And plough the ſurges of the ſtormy main?

Thee, frontleſs man, we follow'd from afar;
Thy inſtruments of death, and tools of war.
Thine is the triumph; ours the toil alone: [throne.
We bear thee on our backs, and mount thee on the
For thee we fall in fight; for thee redreſs
Thy baffled brother; not the wrongs of Greece.
And now thou threaten'ſt with unjuſt decree,
To puniſh thy affronting heav'n on me.
To ſeize the prize which I ſo dearly bought;
By common ſuff'rage giv'n, confirm'd by lot.
Mean match to thine: For ſtill above the reſt,
Thy hook'd rapacious hands uſurp the beſt.
Though mine are firſt in fight, to force the prey,
And laſt ſuſtain the labours of the day.
Nor grudge I thee the much the Grecians give;
Nor murm'ring take the little I receive.
Yet ev'n this little, thou, who wou'dſt ingroſs
The whole, inſatiate, envy'ſt as thy loſs.
Know, then, for Phthya, fix'd is my return:
Better at home my ill-paid pains to mourn,
Than from an equal here ſuſtain the public ſcorn.

The king, whoſe brows with ſhining gold were
bound, [round,
Who ſaw his throne with ſcepter'd ſlaves incompaſs'd
Thus anſwer'd ſtern: Go! at thy pleaſure, go!
We need not ſuch a friend, nor fear we ſuch a foe.
There will not want to follow me in fight:
Jove will aſſiſt, and Jove aſſert my right.
But thou of all the kings (his care below)
Art leaſt at my command, and moſt my foe.
Debates, diſſentions, uproars are thy joy;
Provok'd without offence, and practis'd to deſtroy.

Strength is of brutes, and not thy boaſt alone;
At leaſt 'tis lent from heav'n, and not thy own.
Fly then, ill manner'd, to thy native land,
And there, thy ant-born Myrmidons command.
But mark this menace; ſince I muſt reſign
My black-eyed maid, to pleaſe the pow'rs divine;
(A well-rigg'd veſſel in the port attends,
Mann'd at my charge, commanded by my friends;)
The ſhip ſhall waft her to her wiſh'd abode,
Full fraught with holy bribes to the far ſhooting-god.
This thus diſpatch'd, I owe myſelf the care,
My fame and injur'd honour to repair;
From thy own tent, proud man, in thy deſpight,
This hand ſhall raviſh thy pretended right:
Briſeis ſhall be mine, and thou ſhalt ſee,
What odds of awful pow'r I have on thee; [gree
That others at thy coſt may learn the diff'rence of de-

At this th' impatient hero ſourly ſmil'd;
His heart impetuous in his boſom boil'd,
And joſtled by two tides of equal ſway,
Stood, for a while, ſuſpended in his way;
Betwixt his reaſon, and his rage untam'd;
One whiſper'd ſoft, and one aloud reclaim'd.
That only counſell'd to the ſafer ſide;
This to the ſword, his ready hand apply'd.
Unpuniſh'd to ſupport th' affront was hard;
Nor eaſy was th' attempt to force the guard.
But ſoon the thirſt of vengeance fir'd his blood;
Half ſhone his faulchion, and half ſheath'd it ſtood.
In that nice moment, Pallas, from above,
Commiſſion'd by th' imperial wife of Jove,

Deſcended ſwift: (The white arm'd queen was loth
The fight ſhould follow; for ſhe favour'd both:)
Juſt as in act he ſtood, in clouds inſhrin'd,
Her hand ſhe faſten'd on his hair behind;
Then backward by his yellow curls ſhe drew:
To him, and him alone confeſs'd in view.
Tame by ſuperior force, he turn'd his eyes,
Aghaſt at firſt, and ſtupid with ſurprize;
But by her ſparkling eyes, and ardent look,
The virgin-warrior known, he thus beſpoke.
Com'ſt thou, Celeſtial, to behold my wrongs?
Then view the vengeance which to crimes belongs.
Thus he. The blue ey'd goddeſs thus rejoin'd;
I come to calm thy turbulence of mind.
If reaſon will reſume her ſov'reign ſway;
And ſent by Juno, her commands obey.
Equal ſhe loves you both, and I protect.
Then give thy guardian gods their due reſpect;
And ceaſe contention; be thy words ſevere,
Sharp as he merits; but the ſword forbear.
An hour unhop'd already wings her way,
When he his dire affront ſhall dearly pay.
When the proud king ſhall ſue, with trebble gain,
To quit thy loſs and conquer thy diſdain.
But thou ſecure of my unfailing word,
Compoſe thy ſwelling ſoul, and ſheath the ſword.
The youth thus anſwer'd mild: Auſpicious maid,
Heav'n's will be mine, and your commands obey'd.
The gods are juſt; and when, ſubduing ſenſe,
We ſerve their pow'rs, provide the recompence.
He ſaid; with ſurly faith believ'd her word,
And, in the ſheath, reluctant, plung'd the ſword.

Her meſſage done, ſhe mounts the bleſt abodes,
And mix'd among the ſenate of the gods.
At her departure his diſdain return'd:
The fire ſhe fann'd, with greater fury burn'd;
Rumbling within till thus it found a vent:
Daſtard, and drunkard, mean and inſolent!
Tongue-valiant here, vaunter of thy might,
In threats the foremoſt, but the lag in fight!
When did thou thruſt amid the mingl'd preſs,
Content to bid the war aloof in peace?
Arms are the trade of each plebeian ſoul;
'Tis death to fight; but kingly to controul.
Lord-like at eaſe, with arbitrary pow'r,
To peel the chiefs, the people to devour.
Theſe, traitor, are thy talents; ſafer far
Than to contend in fields, and toils of war.
Nor coud'ſt thou thus have dar'd the common hate,
Were not their ſouls as abject as their ſtate.
But, by this ſceptre, ſolemnly I ſwear,
(Which never more green leaf or growing branch ſhall bear,
Torn from the tree, and giv'n by Jove to thoſe
Who laws diſpenſe and mighty wrongs oppoſe)
That when the Grecians want my wonted aid,
No gift ſhall bribe it, and no pray'r perſuade.
When Hector comes, the homicide, to wield
His conquering arms, with corps to ſtrow the field:
Then ſhalt thou mourn thy pride; and late confeſs
My wrong repented, when 'tis paſt redreſs.
He ſaid; and with diſdain in open view,
Againſt the ground his golden ſceptre threw.
Then ſat; With boiling rage Atrides burn'd,
And foam betwixt his gnaſhing grinders churn'd.

But from his ſeat the Pylian prince aroſe,
With reas'ning mild, their madneſs to compoſe:
Words, ſweet as honey, from his mouth diſtill'd;
Two centuries already he fulfill'd;
And now began the third; unbroken yet;
Once fam'd for courage; ſtill in counſel great.
What worſe, he ſaid, can Argos undergo,
What more can gratify the Phrygian foe,
Than theſe diſtemper'd heats? if both the lights
Of Greece their private int'reſt diſunites!
Believe a friend, with thrice your years increas'd,
And let theſe youthful paſſions be repreſs'd:
I flouriſh'd long before your birth; and then
Liv'd equal with a race of braver men,
Than theſe dim eyes ſhall e'er behold again.
Ceneus and Dryas, and, excelling them,
Great Theſeus, and the force of greater Polypheme.
With theſe I went, a brother of the war,
Their dangers to divide; their fame to ſhare.
Nor idle ſtood with unaſſiſting hands,
When ſavage beaſts, and mens ſavage bands,
Their virtuous toil ſubdu'd: Yet thoſe I ſway'd
With pow'rful ſpeech; I ſpoke, and they obey'd.
If ſuch as thoſe my counſels cou'd reclaim,
Think not, young warriors, your diminiſh'd name
Shall loſe of luſtre, by ſubjecting rage
To the cool dictates of experienc'd age.
Thou, King of men, ſtretch not thy ſovereign ſway
Beyond the bounds free ſubjects can obey;
But let Pelides in his prize rejoice,
Atchiev'd in arms, allow'd by public voice.

Nor thou, brave champion, with his pow'r contend,
Before whoſe throne ev'n kings their lower'd ſceptres bend.
The head of action he, and thou the hand;
Matchleſs thy force; but mightier his command:
Thou firſt, O king, releaſe the rights of ſway,
Pow'r, ſelf-reſtrain'd, the people beſt obey.
Sanctions of law from thee derive their ſource;
Command thyſelf, whom no commands can force.
The ſon of Thetis, rampier of our hoſt,
Is worth our care to keep; nor ſhall my pray'rs be loſt.
Thus Neſtor ſaid, and ceas'd: Atrides broke
His ſilence next; but ponder'd e'er he ſpoke.
Wiſe are thy words, and glad I would obey;
But this proud man affects imperial ſway.
Controlling kings, and trampling on our ſtate,
His will is law; and what he wills is fate.
The gods have giv'n him ſtrength: But whence the ſtile
Of lawleſs pow'r aſſum'd, or licence to revile?
Achilles cut him ſhort, and thus reply'd:
My worth allow'd in words, is in effect deny'd:
For who but a poltroon, poſſeſs'd with fear,
Such haughty inſolence can tamely bear?
Command thy ſlaves; my free-born ſoul diſdains
A tyrant's curb, and reſtiff breaks the reins.
Take this along, that no diſpute ſhall riſe
(Though mine the woman) for the raviſh'd prize;
But ſhe expected, as unworthy ſtrife,
Dare not, I charge thee dare not, on thy life,
Touch ought of mine beſide, by lot my due,
But ſtand aloof, and think profane to view;

This faulchion, elſe, not hitherto withſtood,
Theſe hoſtile fields ſhall fatten with thy blood.
He ſaid: And roſe the firſt; the council broke;
And all their grave conſults diſſolv'd in ſmoke.
The royal youth retir'd, on vengeance bent,
Patroclus follow'd ſilent to his tent.
Mean time, the king with gifts a veſſel ſtores;
Supplies the banks with twenty choſen oars:
And next, to reconcile the ſhooter god,
Within her hollow ſides the ſacrifice he ſtow'd:
Chryſeis laſt was ſet on board, whoſe hand
Ulyſſes took, intruſted with command; [land.
They plow the liquid ſeas, and leave the leſs'ning
Atrides then, his outward zeal to boaſt,
Bade purify the ſin-polluted hoſt.
With perfect hecatombs the god they grac'd,
Whoſe offer'd intrails in the main were caſt.
Black bulls and bearded goats on altars lie,
And clouds of ſav'ry ſtench involve the ſky.
Theſe pomps the royal hypocrite deſign'd
For ſhew; but harbour'd vengeance in his mind:
Till holy malice, longing for a vent,
At length diſcover'd his conceal'd intent.
Talthybius, and Eurybates the juſt
Heralds of arms, and miniſters of truſt,
He call'd, and thus beſpoke: Haſte hence your way,
And from the goddeſs-born demand his prey.
If yielded, bring the captive; if deny'd,
The king (ſo tell him) ſhall chaſtiſe his pride;
And with arm'd multitudes in perſon come,
To vindicate his pow'r, and juſtify his doom.

This hard command unwilling they obey,
And o'er the barren ſhore purſue their way, [lay.
Where quarter'd in their camp the fierce Theſſalians
Their ſov'reign ſeated on his chair they find,
His penſive cheek upon his hand reclin'd,
And anxious thoughts revolving in his mind.
With gloomy looks he ſaw them ent'ring in
Without ſalute; nor durſt they firſt begin,
Fearful of raſh offence and death foreſeen.
He ſoon the cauſe divining, clear'd his brow;
And thus did liberty of ſpeech allow.

Interpreters of gods and men, be bold;
Awful your character, and uncontroll'd;
Howe'er unpleaſing be the news you bring,
I blame not you, but your imperious king.
You come, I know, my captive to demand;
Patroclus give her to the herald's hand.
But you, authentic witneſſes, I bring,
Before the gods and your ungrateful king,
Of this my manifeſt; that never more
This hand ſhall combat on the crooked ſhore:
No, let the Grecian pow'rs, oppreſs'd in fight,
Unpity'd periſh in their tyrant's ſight.
Blind of the future, and by rage miſled,
He pulls his crimes upon his people's head.
Forc'd from the field in trenches to contend,
And his inſulted camp from foes defend.
He ſaid; and ſoon obeying his intent,
Patroclus brought Briſeis from her tent;
Then to th' intruſted meſſengers reſign'd:
She wept, and often caſt her eyes behind:

Forc'd from the man ſhe lov'd; they led her thence,
Along the ſhore a pris'ner to their prince.
Sole on the barren ſands the ſuff'ring chief
Roar'd out for anguiſh, and indulg'd his grief.
Caſt on his kindred ſeas a ſtormy look,
And his upbraided mother thus beſpoke.
Unhappy parent of a ſhort-liv'd ſon,
Since Jove in pity by thy pray'rs was won
To grace my ſmall remains of breath with fame,
Why loads he this imbitter'd life with ſhame?
Suff'ring his king of men to force my ſlave,
Whom well deſerv'd in war the Grecians gave.
Set by old Ocean's ſide the goddeſs heard;
Then from the ſecret deep her head ſhe rear'd:
Roſe like a morning-miſt, and thus begun
To ſooth the ſorrows of her plaintive ſon.
Why cries my care, and why conceals his ſmart,
Let thy afflicted parent ſhare her part?
Then, ſighing from the bottom of his breaſt,
To the ſea-goddeſs thus the goddeſs-born addreſs'd.
Thou know'ſt my pain, which telling but recalls:
By force of arms we raz'd the Theban walls;
The ranſack'd city, taken by our toils,
We left, and hither brought the golden ſpoils:
Equal we ſhar'd them; but, before the reſt,
The proud prerogative had ſeiz'd the beſt.
Chryſeis was the greedy tyrant's prize,
Chryſeis roſy-cheek'd, with charming eyes.
Her ſire, Apollo's prieſt, arriv'd, to buy,
With proffer'd gifts of price, his daughter's liberty.
Suppliant before the Grecian chiefs he ſtood,
Awful, and arm'd with enſigns of his god:

Bare was his hoary head, one holy hand [command.
Held forth his laurel-crown, and one his ſceptre of
His ſuit was common, but above the reſt
To both the brother-princes was addreſs'd.
With ſhouts of loud acclaim the Greeks agree
To take the gifts, to ſet the pris'ner free.
Not ſo the tyrant, who with ſcorn the prieſt
Receiv'd, and with opprobrious words diſmiſs'd.
The good old man, forlorn of human aid,
For vengeance to his heav'nly patron pray'd:
The godhead gave a favourable ear,
And granted all to him he held ſo dear;
In an ill hour his piercing ſhafts he ſped;
And heaps on heaps of ſlaughter'd Greeks lay dead.
While round the camp he rang'd; at length aroſe
A ſeer who well divin'd, and durſt diſcloſe
The ſource of all our ills: I took the word,
And urg'd the ſacred ſlave to be reſtor'd.
The gods appeas'd; the ſwelling monarch ſtorm'd;
And then the vengeance vow'd, he ſince perform'd.
The Greeks 'tis true, their ruin to prevent,
Have to the royal prieſt his daughter ſent;
But from their haughty king his heralds came,
And ſeiz'd, by his command, my captive dame,
By common ſuffrage giv'n; but thou be won,
If in thy pow'r, t' avenge thy injur'd ſon:
Aſcend the ſkies, and ſupplicating move
Thy juſt complaint to cloud-compelling Jove.
If thou by either word or deed haſt wrought
A kind remembrance in his grateful thought,
Urge him by that; for often haſt thou ſaid
Thy pow'r was once not uſeleſs in his aid.

When he who high above the higheſt reigns,
Surpriz'd by traitor-gods, was bound in chains;
When Juno, Pallas, with ambition fir'd,
And his blue brother of the ſeas conſpir'd,
Thou freed'ſt the ſov'reign from unworthy bands,
Thou brought'ſt Briareus with his hundred hands,
(So call'd in heav'n, but mortal men below
By his terreſtrial name, Ægeon know:
Twice ſtronger than his ſire, who ſat above
Aſſeſſor to the throne of thund'ring Jove.)
The gods, diſmay'd at his approach, withdrew,
Nor durſt their unaccompliſh'd crime purſue.
That action to his grateful mind recal;
Embrace his knees, and at his footſtool fall;
That now if ever he will aid our foes;
Let Troy's triumphant troops the camp incloſe:
Ours, beaten to the ſhore, the ſiege forſake,
And what their king deſerves with him partake:
That the proud tyrant at his proper coſt,
May learn the value of the man he loſt.

To whom the mother-goddeſs thus reply'd,
Sigh'd e'er ſhe ſpoke, and while ſhe ſpoke ſhe cry'd:
Ah wretched me! by fates averſe decreed.
To bring thee forth with pain, with care to breed!
Did envious heav'n not otherwiſe ordain,
Safe in thy hollow ſhips thou ſhould'ſt remain;
Nor ever tempt the fatal field again.
But now thy planet ſheds his pois'nous rays,
And ſhort and full of ſorrow are thy days.
For what remains, to heav'n I will aſcend,
And at the thund'rer's throne thy ſuit commend.

Till then, ſecure in ſhips, abſtain from fight,
Indulge thy grief in tears, and vent thy ſpight.
For yeſterday the court of heav'n with Jove
Remov'd; 'tis dead vacation now above.
Twelve days the gods their ſolemn revels keep,
And quaff with blameleſs Ethiops in the deep.
Return'd from thence, to heav'n my flight I take,
Knock at the brazen gates, and providence awake.
Embrace his knees, and ſuppliant to the ſire,
Doubt not I will obtain the grant of thy deſire.
She ſaid: And parting left him on the place,
Swoln with diſdain, reſenting his diſgrace:
Revengeful thoughts revolving in his mind,
He wept for anger, and for love he pin'd.

Mean time with proſperous gales Ulyſſes brought
The ſlave, and ſhip with ſacrifices fraught,
To Chryſa's port; where, ent'ring with the tide,
He drop'd his anchors, and his oars he ply'd.
Furl'd ev'ry ſail, and drawing down the maſt,
His veſſel moor'd, and made with haulſers faſt.
Deſcending on the plain, aſhore they bring
The hecatomb, to pleaſe the ſhooter king.
The dame before an altar's holy fire
Ulyſſes led, and thus beſpoke her ſire.

Reverenc'd be thou, and be thy god ador'd:
The king of men thy daughter has reſtor'd;
And ſent by me with preſents and with pray'r;
He recommends him to thy pious care.
That Phoebus at thy ſuit his wrath may ceaſe,
And give the penitent offenders peace.

He ſaid, and gave her to her father's hands,
Who glad receiv'd her, free from ſervile bands.

This done, in order they with ſober grace,
Their gifts around the well-built altar place.
Then waſh'd and took the cakes; while Chryſes ſtood
With hands upheld, and thus invok'd his god.

God of the ſilver bow, whoſe eyes ſurvey
The ſacred Cilla, thou whoſe awful ſway
Chryſa the bleſs'd, and Tenedos obey!
Now hear, as thou before my pray'r haſt heard,
Againſt the Grecians, and their prince, preferr'd:
Once thou haſt honour'd, honour once again
Thy prieſt, nor let his ſecond vows be vain.
But from th' afflicted hoſt, and humbled prince,
Avert thy wrath, and ceaſe thy peſtilence.
Apollo heard, and conquering his diſdain,
Unbent his bow, and Greece reſpir'd again.

Now when the ſolemn rites of pray'r were paſt,
Their ſalted cakes on crackling flames they caſt.
Then, turning back, the ſacrifice they ſped:
The fatted oxen ſlew, and flea'd the dead.
Chop'd off their nervous thighs, and next prepar'd
T' involve the lean in cauls, and mend with lard.
Sweat-breads and collops were with ſkewers prick'd
About the ſides, imbibing what they deck'd.
The prieſt with holy hands was ſeen to tine
The cloven wood, and pour the ruddy wine.
The youth approach'd the fire, and as it burn'd
On five ſharp broachers rank'd, the roaſt they turn'd:
Theſe morſels ſtay'd their ſtomachs, then the reſt
They cut in legs and fillets for the feaſt;
Which drawn and ſerv'd, their hunger they appeaſe
With ſav'ry meat, and ſet their minds at eaſe.

Now when the rage of eating was repell'd,
The boys with gen'rous wine the goblets fill'd.
The firſt libations to the gods they pour:
And then with ſongs indulge the genial hour;
Holy debauch! till day to night they bring,
With hymns and paeans to the bowyer king.
At ſun-ſet to their ſhips they make return,
And ſnore ſecure on decks, till roſy morn.

The ſkies with dawning day were purpl'd o'er,
Awak'd, with lab'ring oars they leave the ſhore:
The pow'r appeas'd, with winds ſuffic'd the ſail,
The bellying canvas ſtrutted with the gale;
The waves indignant roar with ſurly pride,
And preſs againſt the ſides, and beaten off divide.
They cut the foamy way, with force impell'd
Superior, till the Trojan port they held:
Then hauling on the ſtrand their gally moor,
And pitch their tents along the crooked ſhore.

Meantime the goddeſs-born, in ſecret pin'd;
Nor viſited the camp, nor in the council join'd,
But keeping cloſe, his gnawing heart he fed
With hopes of vengeance on the tyrant's head:
And wiſh'd for bloody wars and mortal wounds,
And of the Greeks oppreſs'd in fight to hear the dying ſounds.

Now, when twelve days compleat had run their race,
The gods bethought them of the cares belonging to their place.
Jove at their head aſcending from the ſea,
A ſhoal of puny pow'rs attend his way.
Then Thetis, not unmindful of her ſon,
Emerging from the deep, to beg her boon,

Purſu'd their track; and waken'd from his reſt,
Before the ſovereign ſtood a morning gueſt.
Him in the circle, but apart, ſhe found:
The reſt at awful diſtance ſtood around.
She bow'd, and e'er ſhe durſt her ſuit begin,
One hand embrac'd his knees, one prop'd his chin.
Then thus: If I, celeſtial Sire, in aught
Have ſerv'd thy will, or gratify'd thy thought,
One glimpſe of glory to my iſſue give;
Grac'd for the little time he has to live.
Diſhonour'd by the king of men he ſtands:
His rightful prize is raviſh'd from his hands.
But thou, O father, in my ſon's defence,
Aſſume thy pow'r, aſſert thy providence.
Let Troy prevail, till Greece th' affront has paid,
With doubled honours; and redeem'd his aid.
She ceas'd; but the conſid'ring god was mute;
'Till ſhe, reſolv'd to win, renew'd her ſuit;
Nor loos'd her hold, but forc'd him to reply:
Or grant me my petition, or deny.
Jove cannot fear: Then tell me to my face,
That I, of all the gods am leaſt in grace.
This can I bear, the cloud-compeller mourn'd,
And ſighing, firſt, this anſwer he return'd.
Know'ſt thou what clamours will diſturb my reign,
What my ſtunn'd ears from Juno muſt ſuſtain?
In council ſhe gives licence to her tongue;
Loquacious, brawling, ever in the wrong.
And now ſhe will my partial pow'r upbraid,
If alienate from Greece, I give the Trojans aid.
But thou depart, and ſhun her jealous ſight,
The care be mine to do Pelides right.

Go then, and on the faith of Jove rely;
When nodding to thy ſuit, he bows the ſky.
This ratifies th' irrevocable doom:
The ſign ordain'd, that what I will ſhall come:
The ſtamp of heav'n, and ſeal of fate. He ſaid,
And ſhook the ſacred honours of his head.
With terror trembled heav'n's ſubſiding hill:
And from his ſhaken curls ambroſial dews diſtill.
The goddeſs goes exulting from his ſight, [light.
And ſeeks the ſeas profound; and leaves the realms of

He moves into his hall: The pow'rs reſort,
Each from his houſe to fill the ſov'reign's court.
Nor waiting ſummons, nor expecting ſtood;
But met with reverence, and receiv'd the God.
He mounts the throne; and Juno took her place:
But ſullen diſcontent ſat lowring on her face.
With jealous eyes, at diſtance ſhe had ſeen,
Whiſp'ring with Jove the ſilver-footed queen;
Then, impotent of tongue, (her ſilence broke)
Thus turbulent in rattling tone ſhe ſpoke.

Author of ills, and cloſe contriver Jove!
Which of thy dames, what proſtitute of love,
Has held thy ear ſo long, and begg'd ſo hard,
For ſome old ſervice done, ſome new reward?
Apart you talk'd, for that's your ſpecial care;
The conſort never muſt the council ſhare.
One gracious word is for a wife too much:
Such is a marriage-vow, and Jove's own faith is ſuch.

Then thus the ſire of gods, and men below,
What I have hidden, hope not thou to know.
Ev'n goddeſſes are women: And no wife
Has pow'r to regulate her huſband's life.

Counſel ſhe may; and I will give thy ear
The knowledge firſt, of what is fit to hear.
What I tranſact with others, or alone,
Beware to learn; nor preſs too near the throne.
To whom the goddeſs with the charming eyes,
What haſt thou ſaid, O tyrant of the ſkies!
When did I ſearch the ſecrets of thy reign,
Though privileg'd to know, but privileg'd in vain?
But well thou doſt, to hide from common ſight
Thy cloſe intrigues, too bad to bear the light.
Nor doubt I, but the ſilver-footed dame,
Tripping from ſea, on ſuch an errand came,
To grace her iſſue, at the Grecians coſt,
And for one peeviſh man deſtroy an hoſt.
To whom the thund'rer made this ſtern reply;
My houſhold-curſe, my lawful plague, the ſpy
Of Jove's deſigns, his other ſquinting eye;
Why this vain prying, and for what avail?
Jove will be maſter ſtill and Juno fail.
Shou'd thy ſuſpicious thoughts divine aright,
Thou but becom'ſt more odious to my ſight,
For this attempt; uneaſy life to me
Still watch'd, and importun'd, but worſe for thee.
Curb that impetuous tongue, before too late
The gods behold, and tremble at thy fate.
Pitying, but daring not in thy defence,
To lift a hand againſt omnipotence.
This heard, the imperious queen ſate mute with fear;
Nor further durſt incenſe the gloomy thunderer.
Silence was in the court at this rebuke:
Nor cou'd the gods abaſh'd, ſuſtain their ſov'reign's look.

The limping ſmith, obſerv'd the ſadden'd feaſt;
And hopping here and there, (himſelf a jeſt)
Put in his word, that neither might offend;
To Jove obſequious, yet his mother's friend.
What end in heav'n will be of civil war,
If gods of pleaſure will for mortals jar?
Such diſcord but diſturbs our jovial feaſt;
One grain of bad, embitters all the beſt.
Mother, tho' wiſe yourſelf, my counſel weigh;
'Tis much unſafe my ſire to diſobey.
Not only you provoke him to your coſt,
But mirth is marr'd, and the good cheer is loſt.
Tempt not his heavy hand; for he has pow'r
To throw you headlong, from his heav'nly tow'r.
But one ſubmiſſive word, which you let fall,
Will make him in good humour with us all.
He ſaid no more, but crown'd a bowl, unbid:
The laughing nectar overlook'd the lid:
Then put it to her hand; and thus purſu'd,
This curſed quarrel be no more renew'd.
Be, as becomes a wife, obedient ſtill;
Though griev'd, yet ſubject to her huſband's will.
I wou'd not ſee you beaten; yet afraid
Of Jove's ſuperior force, I dare not aid.
Too well I know him, ſince that hapleſs hour,
When I and all the gods employ'd our pow'r
To break your bonds: Me by the heel he drew;
And o'er heav'n's battlements with fury threw.
All day I fell; my flight at morn begun,
And ended not but with the ſetting ſun.
Pitch'd on my head, at length the Lemnian-ground
Receiv'd my batter'd ſkull, the Sinthians heal'd my wound.

At Vulcan's homely mirth his mother ſmil'd,
And ſmiling took the cup the clown had fill'd.
The reconciler bowl went round the board,
Which empty'd, the rude ſkinker ſtill reſtor'd.
Loud fits of laughter ſeiz'd the gueſts, to ſee
The limping god ſo deft at his new miniſtry.
The feaſt continu'd till declining light: [night.
They drank, they laugh'd, they lov'd, and then 'twas
Nor wanted tuneful harp, nor vocal quire;
The Muſes ſung; Apollo touch'd the lyre.
Drunken at laſt, and drowſy, they depart,
Each to his houſe; adorn'd with labour'd art
Of the lame architect; the thund'ring god
Ev'n he withdrew to reſt, and had his load.
His ſwimming head to needful ſleep apply'd;
And Juno lay unheeded by his ſide.

The End of the Third Volume.

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Dryden, John, 1631-1700

Fables, Ancient And Modern Translated Into Verse, From Homer, Ovid, Boccace, And Chaucer ; With Original Poems

Bd.: 3

Edinburgh (1773)

P.o.angl. 284-11
urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10748231-4